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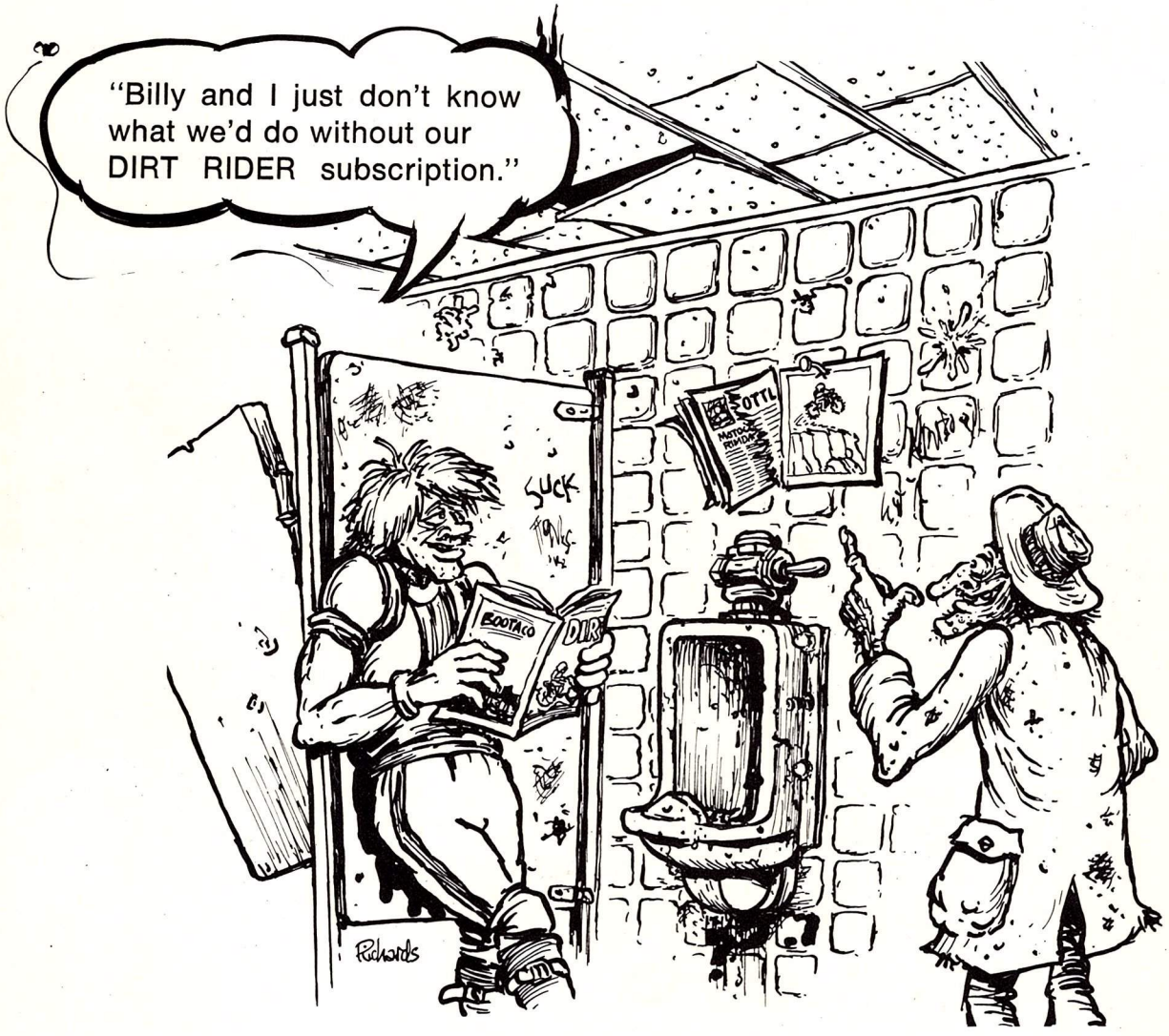

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VOL. 12/NO. 2 FEBRUARY 1976

TESTS

20 HONDA CR 250 VS. SUZUKI RM 250
Mellow yellow meets the toggle switch

COMPETITION

50 HOPETOWN 17TH ANNUAL GRAND PRIX
More than a race; a happening

TECHNICAL

16 MARZOCCHI REPAIR
Step-by-step, how to's, why's and wuffo's

31 38mm CARBURETOR CONVERSION KIT
Big breather for the 125 Suzuki

45 S&W SUSPENSION FIX
New suspenders for the Honda CR

59 SKYWAY FREON BAGGERS
Convert your shocks to gassers for ten bucks

61 SNAIL PIPE VS. STOCK
Why not run the thing over the top?

63 LINK-LOK MEETS THE CLIP
A new idea in master links

64 WORKS PERFORMANCE SHOX
No, they aren't like Curnutts

FEATURES

49 ONE YEAR LATER
After mud, slop, dirt, dust and rocks, here's what's left

FICTION

44 BLACKBERRY SUNDAY
Yellow jackets and Yamahas

DEPARTMENTS

5 BACK IN THE SADDLE
Doing what comes naturally, un-naturally

6 EDITORIAL
Oh yeah? Take that!

7 POST ENTRIES
So what if you hate us; at least you write

10 STROKIN' IT
What? He's early!!!

12 MR. KNOW-IT-ALL
The new building hasn't affected his mind

13 SPARE PARTS
All the latest crap

14 NEW PRODUCTS
Wow! That's cheap

74 DNF
Roll over, will ya?

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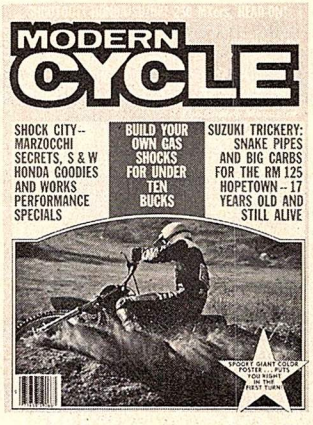
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ON THE COVER:
Ricky Salmon works out on the (new?) Honda CR 250 M2. Staff photo.

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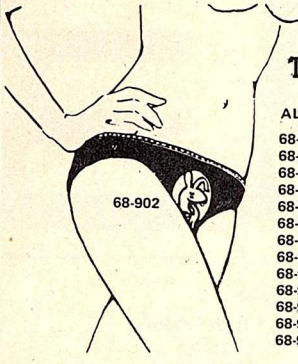

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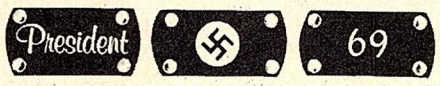

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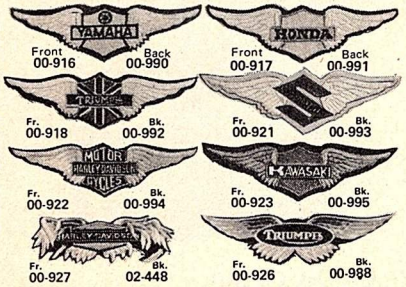

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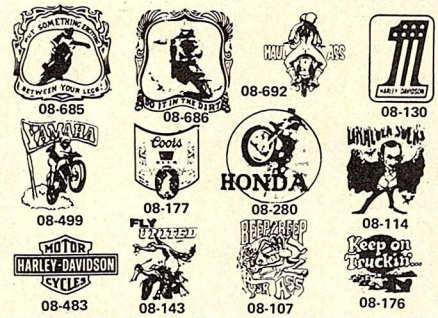

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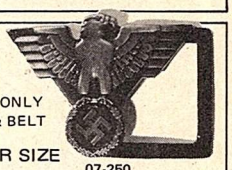

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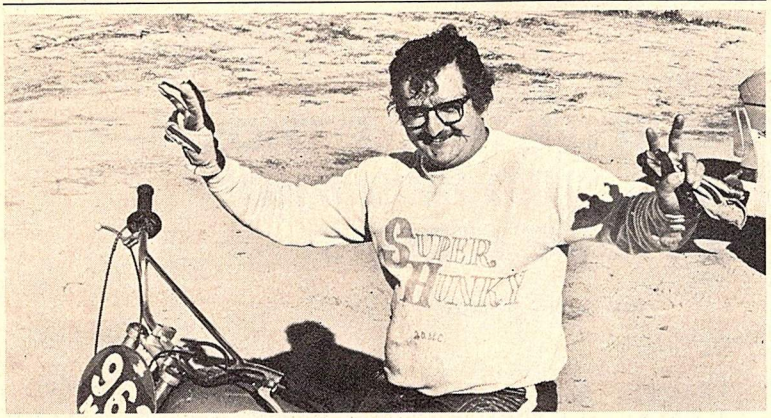

By Rick Sieman

DOIN' WHAT COMES NATURALLY—UNNATURALLY

I've got a friend who is strong enough to strangle a freight train—even if it doesn't stop. He's a bricklayer and is working six or seven days a week. This doesn't leave him much time for racing, but he genuinely loves to race. So, maybe every month or so, he rolls his bike out of the garage and heads for the track.

Now, you might think that being in the rock hard condition that he is, he'd have no problem with the racing. True, he never gets tired while racing, but he has a far more serious problem.

He just can't seem to get his head into all the competition. In his own words, "It just freaks me out . . . traffic all around me . . . bikes zigzagging all over the course. Close contact . . . the violence . . . fighting for a line . . . bumping and shoving in the first turn. Wow! Unless I've been racing four or five weekends in a row, it's impossible to mentally adjust to all that action."

What he says is true. I can recall when he did race steadily. The man was a jet. But the long hours of his high paying job prevent competing on any sort of regular basis.

In order to help my friend, I have devised a training system to mentally prepare him (or anyone else for that matter) for a day at the track, regardless of how long he's been away from the infighting. And, with my system, the training can be accomplished just doing the ordinary every day things that are taken for granted.

That's right. You can take the activities of an ordinary day and turn them into a training session that'll make you a raging tiger on the track. Read on:

1. SUPERMARKET STARTS. This one takes a great deal of fortitude and is not recommended for those with weak hearts. The idea here is to jockey a full shopping cart into the shortest line at the checkout stands. To get maximum benefit, only shop on ultra-busy Saturday mornings and hang back a moment or two before making a run for that short line.

Generally, a two-hundred-pound lady with curlers and a brat under each arm will try to beat you to the quick line. You'll have to shove and jam your cart ruthlessly in front of hers, more often than not, and you may be subject to profanities that would make a drill instructor blanch.

After battling for the good line against one or more of these types, the start of the 500 Junior class at your local track should seem like a pleasant day at the beach. One word of caution: it's best to use as much protective gear as you can, without looking too weird. Flying elbows are common and these people have been known to drop heavy cans of fruit juice on the toes of their competitors to distract them.

2. SUPERMARKET CORNERING. Again, we must warn you that this is a dangerous activity and one likely to lead to injury, embarrassment and possible crashes. To get the best results from this exercise, load your shopping cart up with the heaviest items you can find, putting the very heaviest items on the top of the load. This will make the cart very hard to turn and will also give it a tendency to wash out and sweep wide in the turns.

Starting at the first row in the supermarket, push the cart at flank speed and try to make the corners without slowing down. You may not have much choice in the matter, though. Some of the newer carts have very slippery bearings and will haul ass nicely.

Your problems may be compounded slightly by a "wobbler," a common phenomenon found in most markets. These are carts that have a wheel—generally one of the front ones—binding slight-

(Continued on page 68)

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Editorial

AN OPEN LETTER TO ALL THOSE FOUL-MOUTHED KIDS WHO WROTE ME LETTERS

By Rondo Talbot

Recently, I wrote an article about the SUPERBOWL that drew a great deal of flack from some readers. The point they seemed to disagree with the most, was the comment we made about the high school motocross activities. After carefully reading each and every letter—and doing a lot of soul searching—I am forced to stand by my original statements.

If you didn't read the article, here's basically what was laid down: We thought it was very stupid and highly dangerous to have the high school racers compete at the Coliseum.

The letters had comments ranging from mild disagreement to violent suggestions on what we could do with our magazine. Many of the suggestions seem to be anatomically dangerous, if not uncomfortable.

One comment in particular demands a response from this writer. More than a few individuals stated that injuries were not all that rampant and that . . . "those kids were just as good as the pros in their own way and had a right to be there just like any other racer."

Think about that statement for a moment or two. Now, let reality drift in a bit and analyze the situation. Here we have a track set up for top line professionals in front of fifty thousand people. A dangerous, narrow track under artificial lighting. A track that most of the pros can't stand. A track with man-made jumps in it that loft the bikes unnaturally into the air. And on this track, the promoters turn loose a bunch of . . . you should pardon the expression . . . kids. That's right . . . kids. No matter how you look at it or how you try to rationalize it, they are kids.

Sure, some of those kids have been racing for a few years and are very fast. But most of them are just normal teenage kids who happen to ride motocross.

Professionals? No way.

Enthusiasts? Of course.

But when has any sport let the casual enthusiast indulge in an activity that the pros look at with healthy caution.

Could you picture the promoters of the Indy 500 having a special "high school class" so the little dears can get out there and run around at 200 mph?

And what makes people (or promoters) think that something like the Coliseum MX isn't far more dangerous to compete than in a race like Indy? After all, it doesn't take much more skill than the average chimp has to drive a race car. Bikes are another thing entirely. Before you can even go at moderate speeds on a race bike, you have to have your act together.

Even considering all of the above, the riders are still young and, under the tremendous pressures of 100,000 eyes (plus TV coverage), they'll go to insane lengths to ride completely over their heads. The basic immaturity of all children demands that they show maximum courage in front of their peer group. They know that their buddies and schoolmates are sitting up in the stands watching them like hawks. Back off? Not on your life.

Not on your life. Hmmmm. That seems to be the key to our whole position.

Even though only one rider received severe injuries, dozens of hairy crashes were the order of the night. If nothing else, this was mute testimony to the flexibility of young bodies.

Young bodies, unfortunately, is what we're going to have one of these days if the promoters allow this sort of exhibitionist racing to continue.

What do you think will happen to the sport if a nice young high school boy eats the big one in front of fifty thousand people? It could set the sport back a decade. It's one thing for a seasoned pro to get snuffed; he knows what the consequences are, but most high school kids think they're indestructible and cannot die.

They can die. And they will if they're not allowed to mature at a normal pace in racing at the sportsman level.

If you were at the Coliseum, you saw the way the high school class riders came off the big jump . . . in full lock cross-ups. And, if you were there, you saw more than one horrendous crash as a direct result of the natural youthful tendency to show off in front of a crowd.

If you go to the Coliseum next year and they have the high school races once again, you may see one of these kids die. The odds are simply stacked that way. I don't want to see it happen. We don't need this premature push—and more importantly, they don't need it.

When I wrote those words in the SUPERBOWL article, I knew it would piss a lot of people off. That was part of the reason for coming on so strong. I wanted to make them mad enough to sit down and think about what could happen to a young life just because of a greedy rush against time.

When you're 16, it seems like the future will never come and time stands still. But think a moment; how much does time stand still for a 16-year-old with a mangled body brought on by the artificial push of big time stadium racing?

Let them race; by all means, let them race. But for chrissake, let them do it on the good old local track where the pressures are a bit more understandable.

One last thing: if you disagree with the things we've been saying here, that's your privilege. Just think a little bit before you go shooting your mouth off. I stood next to one of those kids who got busted up at the SUPERBOWL as he laid on the ground writhing in pain. There were tears in his eyes and his body was a mass of hyper nerve endings. A professional? No. Just a kid that you bastards pushed too far, too soon. ●

POST ENTRIES

Modern Cycle Magazine
7950 Deering Avenue
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OUR FIRST PROFANITY CONTEST ENTRY

Dear People,

Just a few words about your recently expressed attitude towards women and racing—

May the curse of Allah put cow dung in your carburetor and cram your throttle down your throat. May your girl friend leave you for another woman and may every dog lift his leg to your tires.

Most sincerely,
Karen Stang
Canton, CT

FEEDBACK

Dear Editor and Friends,

It appears to me that you do not particularly like high school riders. That does not give you the right to knock the way they (we) ride. Nor call us bastards and little shits.

As for myself, I rode the Superbowl, rode many qualifiers to ride the Superbowl, and considered it well organized and run. I have been racing for several years, and think it was one of the best organized races I have participated.

And yes, little Bastards can shut off for the first turn, at least we didn't miss it completely like some of the PROS. . . .

I hope your big foul mouth will cost you lots of readers. You think riders will buy a magazine with a jackass for an editor.

P.S. I did not see you out there trying to do your best . . . yes, I shut off for the first turn.

Thank you for your time,
Corki Moore
100cc Winner

See the editorial, Moore.

MORE FEEDBACK

Your story on Superbowl IV was written with all the brains of a dry pile of batshit. The High School MX'ers worked like hell to get enough points to qualify for the Superbowl. Don't forget that Marty Smith raced High School MX last year and that Marty Tripes won Superbowl I at age 16 and Superbowl II at age 17 (What was it you said about a 16-year-old kid in front of 50,000 people?).

As for the kids falling and getting hurt—Pros that fell Saturday night include Marty Smith (who forgot to turn), Rocket Rex Staten (who, incidentally, didn't lose concentration. His shocks rebounded and shot him across the track), Zdenek Velky, Tony DiStefano and Heikki Mikkola.

Now back to HSMX. I'd like to see you guys down at the Flush Deep Shit *MC* offices get off your dead asses and get out and race some of those "crazy little bastards." I have a friend that raced the Superbowl HSMX that would tear you a new ass on any track of your choice.

I was not able to race the HSMX as I was sidelined with a broken femur sustained in a desert race. I traveled over a hundred miles and half-stood, half-sat all of Saturday afternoon and evening in a body cast and I wasn't a bit disappointed.

As for the "(yawn)" powder puffers, I'd like to see you race Terry Kezar, Cherry Stockton, etc. No way.

Also, if Mickey Thompson's truck wants to make a fool out of itself more power to it. C'mon, *MC*. Get your heads out.

Mark Megowan
16 years old
442L DRA

P.S. May the fleas of a thousand camels infest your asshole and a pound of Sahara Sand find its way to your Pre-mix.

See the editorial, Megowan.

YET MORE FEEDBACK

You don't know shit about high school racing. We're as good as anybody and furthermore . . .

Allen DeLong
Los Angeles, Calif.

See the editorial, DeLong.

I found your comments on the high school racing stupid. We have as much right to race as . . .

Dave Wright
Dayton, Ohio

See the editorial, Wright.

Boy, you guys really pissed me off. I feel that . . .

Karl Davis
Pitts, PA

See the editorial, Davis.

I'm so mad that I could . . .

Peggy Stessner
New York, N.Y.

See the editorial, Stessner.

Where do you . . .

Paul Angelo
Los Angeles, Calif.

See the editorial, Angelo.

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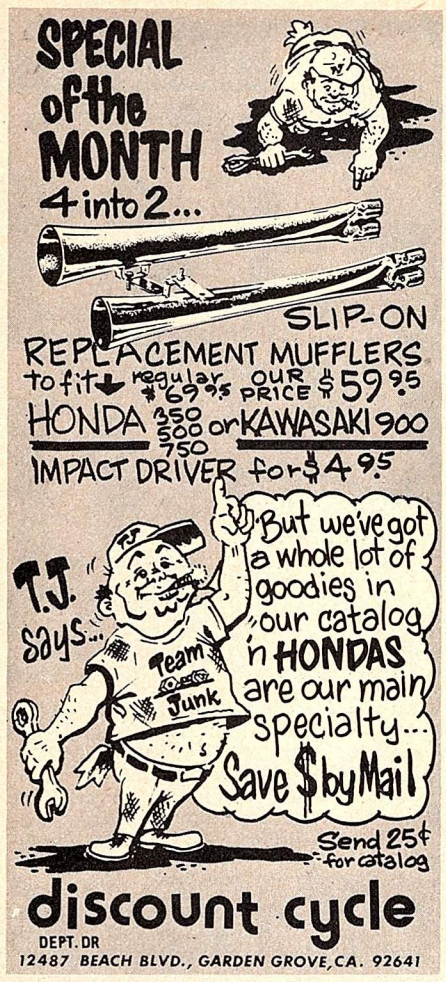

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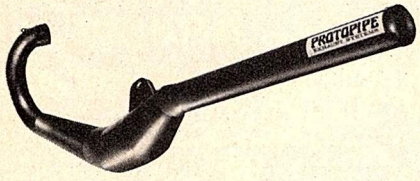

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You . . .

Dave Williamson
Los Angeles, Calif.

See the editorial, Williamson.

APPARENTLY IT TAKES BALLS TO SIGN YOUR NAME

I thoroughly enjoyed your selection and printing of Lady Rider of the Year in the October issue. But was appalled by the post entry and editorial comment by the Male Chauvinist Pigs MC. It's the most degrading, immature and oppressive thing I've read in your magazine yet. How low can you get? I am the editor of a women's magazine, a "woman libber" to you jack-offs, but I dig bikes and help my boyfriend (a Northern California expert) tune his Maico. I guess from now on I'll use your magazine to wipe with.

M.S.P.
Harris, Calif.

PHANTASIA!

I just finished reading your 6 month test on the Desert Phantom; it was super. I'd really like to see some more of that kind of test. And on your test of the CCM 500, in your magazine on page 19, there are those huge lines running from the special Konis to the rear frame rail. What was that line for?

Print this or else.

Steve Ewen
Jupiter, Florida

The rear frame loop holds some extra oil and the lines run from the frame to the shocks. Thanx for the comments on our 6 month test . . . we feel that the opinions of a beginning racer are very valuable, too. Not everyone is an expert.

OPINION

I think you may have the best magazine around by far, except for all of the cussing. Knock it off. Don't print all of those four letter words. It proves nothing.

Greg Lee
Houston, Texas

OPINION

I was reading your post entries in your November issue. And I'm sick of hearing these limp wristed buttheads put down the language you guys use. If they don't like the language tell them to bite off and buy a minicycle magazine, it is written for people with the mentality and vocabulary of an eight-year-old.

P.S. You guys are doing a fantastic job, keep it up.

G.H.
Phoenix, Arizona

Hi Modern Psycho,

I think your magazine is really shaping up. I LOVE your posters you shove in your mag also! Now that I'm in good with you, I have a couple of questions.

The fist question is in the October issue. You had an article about the Adolph Weil Frame Conversion. I want to know if this frame conversion applies to any of the Japanese bikes? I have an extra frame sitting around and wanted to do the conversion to that particular frame.

The second question is—the article about the factory bikes, I looked at the Suzukis and you didn't have much on them. What gives? Is Suzuki working on a new thing for the bikes so they don't want anyone taking closeup pictures, or are they kind of shy?

THE GREAT
Rudy "Tootie" Brake Shoes
San Leandro, Calif.

No. You can only do the Weil measurements to Maicos, but almost any year Maico will accept the mods. Most factories are very secretive about their machines. Honda is the worst, followed by Suzuki.

THE PARSONS SURVEY

Modern Cycle,

One night I sat down and thought that if they had tests to analyze and compare bikes then why couldn't they have tests to analyze and compare magazines? So I sat down and got up all my old cycle magazines and compared them against one another. On the chart below I gave each magazine a number that corresponds with it. Here it is:

Cycle—Number 1, *Popular Cycling*—2, *Dirt Bike*—3, *Motorcyclist*—4, *Dirt Rider*—5, *Modern Cycle*—6.

The way to tally up the scores below is to give one point to the winner of a certain statement, two to the second place finisher, three to the third and so on.

BEST TELL IT LIKE IT IS: 6, 2, 3, 5, 1, 4.

MOST HONEST MAGAZINE: 6, 2, 3, 5, 4, 1.

BEST PHOTOGRAPHS (QUALITY-WISE): 2, 6, 3, 5, 4, 1.

BEST PTOTOGRAPHS (ACTION-WISE): 6, 3, 2, 5, 4, 1.

BEST ANSWERS IN LETTER ENTRY COLUMNS: 6, 3, 2, 5, 4, 1.

BEST TELL IT LIKE IT IS IF YOU LIKE IT OR NOT BIKE TESTS: 6, 2, 5, 3, 1, 4.

FUNNIEST MAGAZINE: 6, 3, 2, 5, 4, 1.

GIVES YOU MOST INFORMATION FOR MONEY: 1, 2, 3, 6, 4, 5.

IS WORTH IT: 6, 2, 3, 5, 4, 1.

Final points: *Cycle*—13 points, *Pop Cycling*—20 points, *Dirt Bike*—25 points, *Dirt Rider*—43 points, *Motorcyclist* and *Modern Cycle* have 47 points each.

(Continued on page 71)

TOO LATE NOW . . .

You blew it. Christmas is past and what did you give your friends for gifts? Same old crap as last year, eh?

You. Ms Biker. Bet you gave the old man another one of those dumb bottles of after shave? Right? I thought so.

And you there . . . you young squirt. Gave pop an ugly, el-cheapo tie with a reindeer on it, didn't you? No imagination.

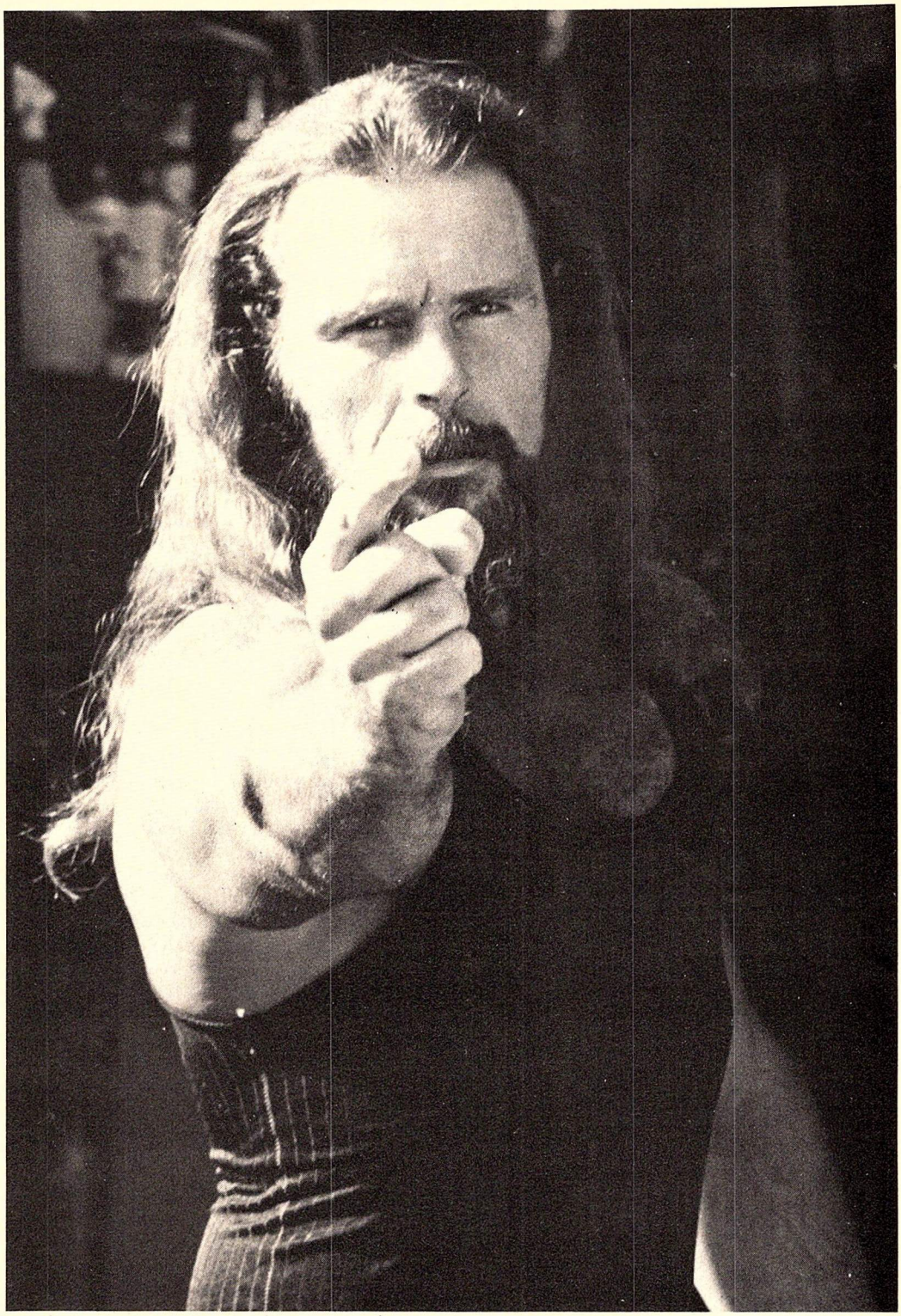
And you there . . . you with little imagination. How many stupid things did you buy for friends of the racing persuasion that were of little or no use? Fuzzy animals . . . clock radios in naked statues . . . sweaters that itch . . . perfumes that smell like a brothel . . . hair dryers that shock when they get wet . . . and so forth.

I tell you, it's enough to gag a maggot.

Why didn't you do like I did? I got all my *real* friends subscriptions to MODERN CYCLE, The Racing Magazine. All those other people that I didn't like, I got the other junk for them.

It's too late now. Christmas is gone. At least for another year. Boy, you really ought to feel shitty about now, you cheap screw.

But don't feel bad. You can make up for it next year. But if you didn't get a sub yourself, fill out the coupon and get your very own Christmas gift every month. What the hell . . . you might as well do it yourself. What makes you think you've got any friends, anyway?



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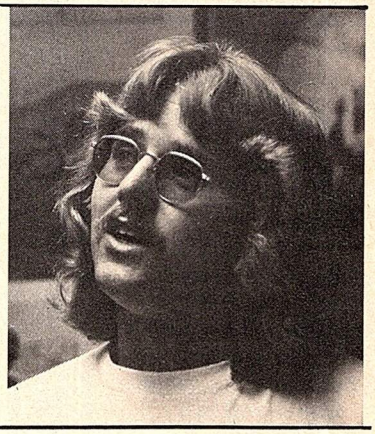
STROKIN' IT

Jim Mercier

THE ONLY TIME IN MY LIFE I WASN'T LATE FOR SOMETHING



When I made the pledge to ride other kinds of events, I wasn't kidding. And just to prove it, I entered the first enduro we saw listed in *Cycle News*. By chance, it was the Tuff N' Nuff, one of the all time killer enduros that's run in the Southern California area.

When we first read about the run, it was a good two months before the event was scheduled. It gave us much time to prepare for it and find out all of the things you need for an enduro.

Right out front, I knew I would need a watch. For this, I dug into the wife's jewelry box and found the wrist watch she gave me for my last birthday. I had never worn it until that moment, other than to try it on when I opened the box at the occasion. I figured that if I had to ride fifty miles with a watch banging around on my wrist, I'd better get good and used to it. I wore the thing every day up until the event.

Most enduros send you a run chart that shows all of the sections, speed changes and all of the stuff that goes with it. We had only a slight problem with this matter, as we were unable to attend the meeting before the run. One of our friends took care of the sign-up and the entries. I had never run in an enduro and never have had an enduro riding card. If this is the case, the sponsoring club usually makes you ride as a C rider. This is the lowest class of rider at enduros. Somehow, David (our buddy who entered us) talked them into letting us ride as B class riders, which enabled us to ride the same course as the A riders. C riders were only allowed to go one loop; others rode two, but different loops.

Things were looking good. We were entered, all of the run charts were going to be mailed about a week before the run and the bikes were impeccably prepared. I was going to ride a Bultaco 250 Frontera and Jon Miller, one of our test riders, was going to ride a WR 250 Husky. Both excellent bikes for this kind of race. I say race, only because that's all we've been riding. But this isn't a real race; more of a race against the clock. Something which I have mastered. I always know what time it is.

To get our minds ready for this long ride, we went out to a riding place called Gorman. It has a long loop that covers almost eighty miles, and winds through trees and rocks.

We rode the loop three times to get ready and familiarize ourselves with the bikes. We were ready, and the enduro wasn't for three weeks. That had to be some sort of record . . . especially for us. Usually, we scramble right up to the last minute and still find things to do sitting on the starting line.

All things were covered, but we still hadn't received our run cards and the time for the enduro was closing fast. We kept telling ourselves that they'd arrive in plenty of time. They didn't.

For some reason, the enduro was going to be held on a Saturday, so we had to leave on the Friday before. We piled all of the junk into my van and headed for the office to see if the mail had brought the run cards. It didn't. We had no choice but to head for the enduro and hash it out with the sign-up people.

Our plan was to leave the Valley at about two or three in the afternoon, which would put us in the pits at about five-ish. Perfect plan, but as plans go, they always get screwed up. Ours was no exception. After one hassle after another, we finally headed out of the Valley at nine-thirty. After three more unscheduled stops we made the freeway.

We had a map that was drawn on the back of a book of matches, but a quote stuck in my mind. "Once you find the lime, you can't miss it." This proved to be true, but finding the lime

at one in the morning wasn't easy. The drive itself was no big deal, but we had these little problems like focusing on the road and remembering where we were going. The air in the van was the reason. That, and the bottle of tequila we found in one of the back cabinets in the van, really gave the drive new perspective. The area in which the enduro was to be held was only two hours away, but for some reason it took us about four. We pulled into Red Mountain at 1:30. According to the map, there was supposed to be lime from this point on. We found none.

If you know anything about the town of Red Mountain, you know what it's like at one in the morning. It's absolutely nothing, zero. If the one street light wasn't burning, you'd never know you were in a town. We drove through it hoping to find the place where the dumb lime began. After about twenty minutes, we noticed a sign ahead. It read, San Diego 168 miles. San Diego is 180 degrees away from where we wanted to be!

The van straightened under the G force of a 60-mile-per-hour donut and the last drop of tequila spilled all over the stereo. That in itself was a relief, because as close as I can figure, that's what cow crap tastes like and I didn't want any more of that poison in my system. This was getting serious. And we were running short of time.

We headed back into the town, looking for someone to ask directions, but the town was sealed up tighter than a bug's nuts. We didn't know which way to go so we pulled over and stopped.

Lemesee, it says limed North of Red Mountain on Trana Road. Hmmn, we didn't pass any road by that name on our drive to Sea World, so it must be that way; pointing into the darkness. I fired up the van and headed down the road, hoping we might find some life form. Any life form would do.

After about five miles, we noticed a big splosh of white. "That must be lime," Jon screamed. But for some reason, it didn't look like the kind of lime mark that you normally might encounter in the desert, but more like an acre of solid white. Maybe they dumped all the lime they had left on this section so you'd be sure to see it. We sat there and looked at the white section for what seemed to be an hour. I got the feeling we were heading the right way so we ventured on.

Another couple of miles and we spied another white mark. We had to be heading the right way and this had to be lime marks all over the place, we knew we had found it. All of a sudden, there was a big old arrow pointing to the left. It came up on us so fast that we missed the turn by a hundred yards. After getting the van back on course, we began to see lights off in the distance and knew we made it.

Down a dirt road about three miles we came to a camper/van city stuck in the middle of the desert. Camp fires everywhere, with people sitting around sipping coffee and carrying on. We hunted through the pits for a familiar truck, then decided to just park this mess and get some rest. Man, was I tired.

All the time we were driving, we had the stereo and the heater blasting at about full tilt, so we had no idea what the temperature was. When we stepped out of the van my body went into shock. You have no idea how cold it gets in the desert when the sun goes down. Once the cold hit us we were wide awake. No way in hell could we get to sleep after having our bodies exposed to this! To keep from freezing we had to start a fire and that led to making coffee, that led to working on the bikes and so on. We didn't have anything to do to the bikes, but we didn't have anything else to do to anything else.

We were turning to physical wrecks before my very eyes. After about an hour of puttering around the bikes, we finally fell asleep.

Morning came very early and with the sound of some nut on a 400 ground shaker blasting right by the van. Miller pounded on the wall and started to groan. I thought the world had come to its end.

The only thing that saved us was the fact that we were on the 59th minute. All of the A riders started to take off at 10:00. That meant we left at 10:59; plenty of time.

First order of business was to talk to the people at sign-up. We found the line with no problem at all and before long, had all things covered. What had happened to the run cards is still a mystery. They gave us duplicates and full instruction. We wandered around the pits for a short while looking for the other members of our party, but no luck.

We dressed and filled the bikes with gas in about ten minutes. I glanced down at the watch; it said 8:00. What? When we got up, the clock said 8:00 and it still said the same time. I took the dumb thing off and shook it. It sprang to life, but stopped as fast as it started. The insides of the thing were loose and making all sorts of noise. Now how in the hell were we supposed to keep on time? Our only saving factor was the other man on our minute, Bruce Woods, had a watch.

The Frontera has a speedo, so we had that covered. Bruce found us about 30 minutes after the hour. We still had plenty of time to get to the starting area.

(Continued on page 44)

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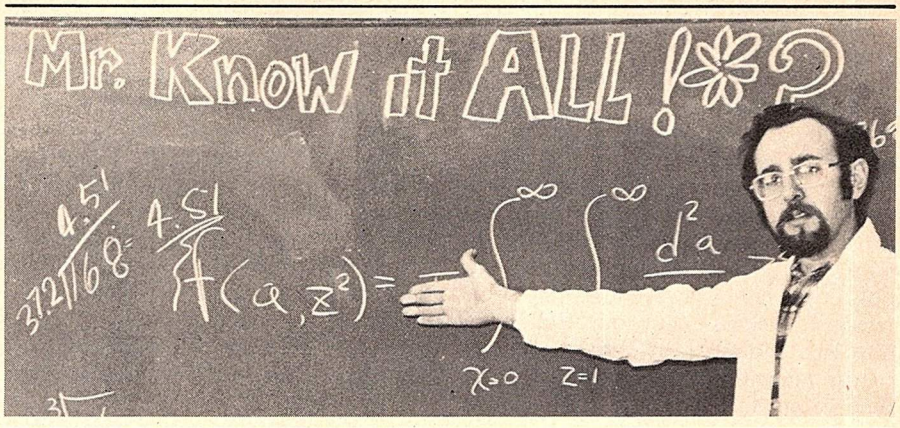


By Vic Krause, MCs Midwest Editor

If you would like to ask Mister Know-It-All a question, just drop a line to MISTER KNOW-IT-ALL, c/o MODERN CYCLE MAGAZINE, 7950 Deering Avenue, Canoga Park, California 91304.

CZ FOR YOU TO SAY

Dear Mr. Krause:

Being unable to find the remedy to my problem, I'd like your help. I can't get a spark from my 125cc CZ. I have painstakingly left no room for error when setting point gap, timing and phasing. Have new plugs and ignition coil.

Hope you can help,
Thomas Chromczak
Utica, New York

Dear Mr. Chromczak:

The CZ does seem to have an electrical system that would have baffled Thomas Edison. The twin coil system is surely bewildering to the novice troubleshooter like yourself. And when spark problems occur somewhere in the system, pinpointing the specific component at fault, or isolating the problem, is difficult at best when you are equipped with a limited understanding. Your phasing is incorrect, yet to simplify your dilemma and to avoid a complex lesson in phasing that you won't grasp anyway, simply follow these instructions and we will convert your CZ to a standard single coil ignition system. You will have a lead from the primary coil on the stator plate that will be connected to the condenser and also in common with the points.

It is also from this point that your feed wire for the upper coil is junctioned. Simply run the feed wire into the primary side terminal of your upper coil and around the other terminal. Completely disconnect and disregard the second upper coil. Switch upper coils if you don't succeed the first time. Another thing, Chromczak, when you write to Mr. Know-It-All, you don't have to say "hope I can help." You should have known I could help you.

THE OBVIOUS ANSWER

Dear Mister Know-It-All:

I have a friend who is the biggest Yamaha freak going. Please settle this argument. He says the Yamaha 100 MX will blow the Suzuki TM 100 off the track.

Thank you,
Bill McLoughlin
Northvale, N.J.

The answer to your argument is actually quite apparent. However, in the interest of maintaining a balance of harmony in an otherwise emotionally charged dispute and rather than alienate either of you fine fellows, I choose to remain noncommittal. If there was a large sum of money involved, I would surely settle this matter.

SHOX

Dear Mr. Know-It-All:

What are the best gas shocks for laid down suspension? I have heard that Kayabas are supposed to be for the money, about $75.00, right now. If not, what is and how much?

Thanks for any info you can give me.

Yours truly,
Scott Ferguson
Vista, Calif.

P.S. *Modern Cycle* and Suzuki is a toss-up for World Champion!

My first preference for a damper unit on a cantilever suspension is the new Moto-X Fox Air Shox. They have just

(Continued on page 68)

SPARE PARTS

CORRECTIO

In the November issue of *MC,* we made a slight misreference to the people we wanted to get. It was in the story about Laguna Seca. At one point in the text, we made a reference to the promoters as the ones responsible for all of the confusion. Wrong. It wasn't the promoters, but the AMA. Those promoters were Trippe/Cox and they aren't the ones to blame.

Since the article was written, we've received many calls and letters from individuals that either participated in that race, or were in some way involved with it. Most of the response has been in our favor, but we'll admit that there are a few who we didn't see eye-to-eye with. We respect these persons' opinions, even if they're wrong.

Our main reason for jumping so hard on the AMA, was because we heard exactly what we wrote from many of the riders. When you hear the riders starting to complain about the way a National race is being held, you listen.

To quote some of the riders, "When you try to cram all of the stuff that's involved in a national road race into two days, you're kidding yourself, unless every little thing goes exactly as planned and they never do. Especially at a course like Laguna Seca, where jetting, gearing and learning the track is so important.

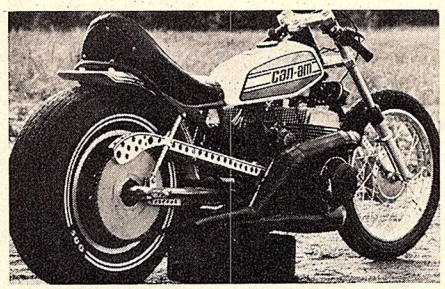
"When the AMA added another production class at the last minute and didn't allow for it in the practice schedule, it really put us in a bind.

"They only had four practice sessions and that was for all of the classes combined, heavyweights and all.

"We had some mechanicals on Friday and barely made the heat race; it really puts a bind on the privateers. Even worse was the fact that the factories had the power to rent the course and do all of their needed adjustments and tuning at their own speed.

"Most of us were really disgusted after driving so far to race and then having to put up with all of that crap, makes it awfully hard."

We didn't mean to throw any unnecessary crap in the faces of the guys at Trippe/Cox, but we were trying to get the point across that something has to be done. Maybe Gavin Trippe, Bruce Cox and Gerrard McCaffery will be more aware of these facts the next time they sponsor a National Road Race, and demand that the sanctioning body see that all things are taken care of.



Service manager, Phil Mickelson of Bombardier, the CanAm people, has built a one-of-a-kind drag bike from a bunch of old pieces. He used a Can-Am 125 chassis, with a 645cc Blizzard snowmobile motor. So far, he's won every event entered on the bike. He has combined motorcycle, snow mobile and automobile technology to come up with his design. He modified the frame by cutting a "pie" section out of the backbone to increase the rake and the trail, as well as lower the center of gravity. Front down tubes were moved forward to accommodate the larger engine and the swingarm is sitting in the stock 125 location. The bike runs double struts on the rear instead of shocks. He limited the travel of the front forks by placing 4″ long wooden plugs in the tubes.

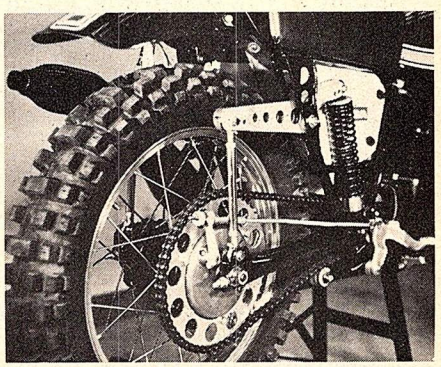
On the front end, he's running 19″ Suzuki wheel and on the back, a 14″ Chevrolet mag wheel with a Firestone F78-14 tire, with a six inch wide tread.

The three cylinder 645cc engine features three Tillotson HD 100AX carbs; transmission is a centrifugal governed torque converter system featuring a high-performance engine-pulley clutch; engagement speed, 8,000 rpm. And a cam-type free-air driven pulley like the ones used in the Blizzard snowmobile. He uses a #50 chain to power the rear wheel after it leaves a jackshaft.

For brakes he uses a Suzuki unit on the front and a Chevrolet hydraulic with Kelsey-Hayes master cylinder on the rear. It has a 61½″ wheelbase; width is 26½″; height is 27″ to the top of the seat and 37″ to the top of the forks; ground clearance is 4″ and the rake is 42 degrees.

No matter how you look at it, it's weird, but at least it's different.

The fastest time he's turned is 7.41 seconds in the eighth mile, reaching a speed of 98 mph. In the quarter mile, he got up to 106 in a time of 11.09 seconds.



WHAT IN HECK IS THAT?

When Ossa decides to do something, they do it. This time they've succeeded in blowing the minds of every other manufacturer in the world. This suspension system was designed by Joe Bolger and Ossa decided to adapt it to their bikes. It utilizes a lever principle that relieves much of the stress from the dampers, and makes turning almost infinite. A few of the features are, 1. Variable rate spring, which allows greater sensitivity and progressive damping. 2. Multiple leverage settings, 36 to be exact, two for the shock and nine for the different position for the rear strut. This allows you to change the leverage on the springs, without changing the spring itself. Another plus is that the changing spring rate makes the damping more independent of the spring requirements.

This will allow the rider to adjust the unit to his individual needs for each course he rides. Rear travel can be moved all the way up to 8½″ of travel with little hassle. With the shocks in the position they are in, there is less chance of the dampers being damaged and the bending characteristics that are produced by moving the shocks forward is reduced. Since the shocks are no longer on the swingarm, there's no need for the arm to be so heavily gusseted as with a regular move up. With the variable spring rate, you can also run a much lighter spring than a normal move-up and the bushings in the shocks should last a bunch longer.

These kits will be available from your local Ossa dealer about the end of February and will fit the Phantom, Super Pioneer and the Desert Phantom.

New Products

KRAUSE GOGGLES

New foam-fit goggles by Skyway—the most comfortable goggles this side of heaven at a down-to-earth price, only $6.95 retail. Complete with tinted and clear lens—like getting two pair for the price of one. Fits all faces, fits over eyeglasses, fits inside the Bell Star helmet, easy mount Velcro strip, the reticulated foam is easy to clean and keeps its shape. Recommended by Mr. Know-It-All.

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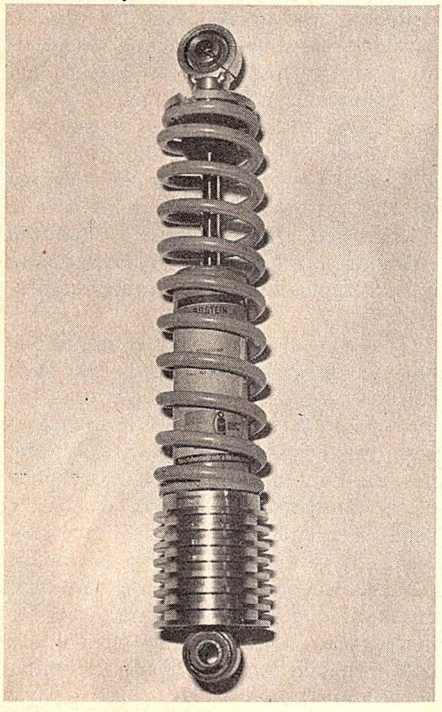

BILSTEIN COOLERS

Need more cooling for those Bilstein shocks you bought last season, but can't afford new ones? Then, the only thing to do is help them out a bit. One thing you could do is increase the cooling area of the shock. Since you can't take them apart, the only thing to do is to add a cooler.

Cycle Products West has adapted their bolt-on coolers to work on the new fat bodied Bilstein shocks. We did a test on these same coolers a while back on a set of Boge shocks and had very good results.

They come with allen set screws that hold them in place. Simply remove the paint from the body and slide the body in place.

Coolers sells for $19.95 and are made for both the small and the large Bilstein shocks. When ordering, specify the body size.

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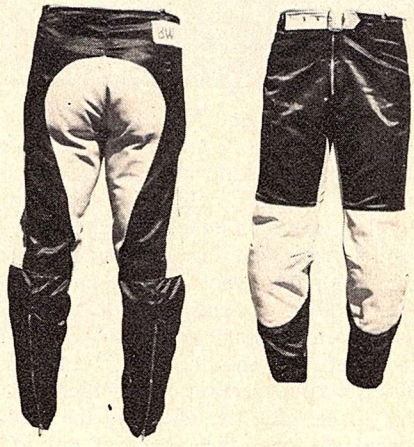
W. LOS ANGELES, CA 90064
(213) 477-0997



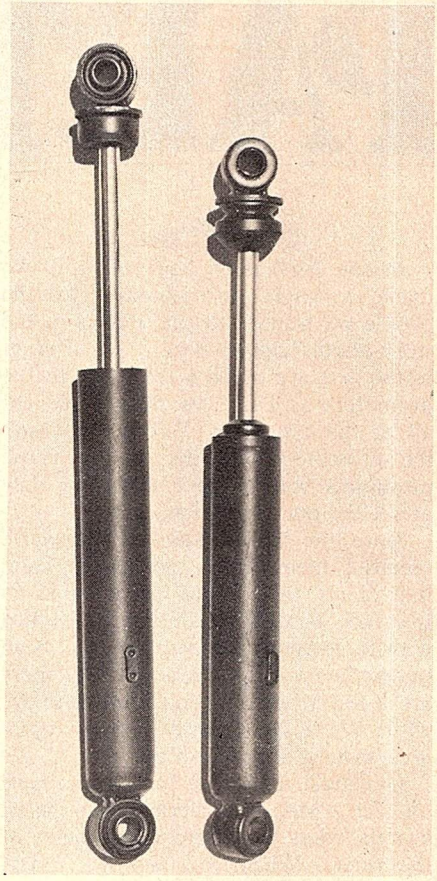
DOUBLE STITCHES IN THEM NYLON BRITCHES

Bill Walters has entered the nylon leather game, but with a slightly different approach. He combines the strength of leather with the comfort of nylon. They give very free movement without sacrificing any strength. All of the seams are double stitched for extra strength and all threads are nylon. Each set comes with snap in hip pads and removable knee and shin guards. Walters designed a new crotch design that allows for freer movement and adds strength. The new design is called diamond wedge.

These pants are available in sizes 28-44 with black, red or blue nylon and any color leather. He'll also letter any set, or add any design that'll fit on the pants.

For more information on these and the other Bill Walters pants, check with your local dealer or call:

BILL WALTERS LEATHERS
7359 VARNA AVE.
NORTH HOLLYWOOD, CA 91606
(213) 982-3738



LONG TRAVEL WITHOUT CUTTING A THING

S&W has come out with a new concept in long travel suspension. It's a long travel shock that eliminates the need for cutting the frame. According to S&W, the shock gets all of the travel and relieves all of the stress that's generated when you move the shocks forward. The long travels shock puts the travel where it counts, in the shock.

For all of you guys out there with stone stock suspended bikes, here's an out. These shocks are available from most local dealers, but if you have trouble finding them, call or write to:

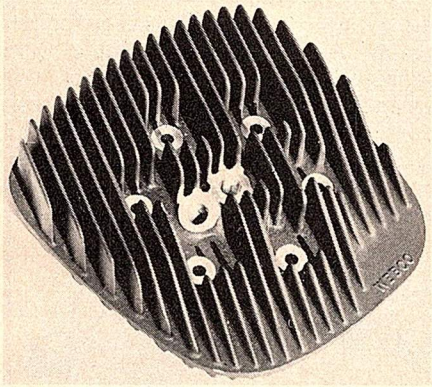
WEBCO INC.
218 MAIN STREET
VENICE, CA 90293
(213) 870-7758

DANGER . . . CONTENTS UNDER PRESSURE

What do you do when you make only pipes and silencers? Why, you come out with paint and cleaners, of course. That's what Torque Engineering has done. They've come out with a new line of cleaners and degreasers for engine and wheel grime. And paints for coating the pipe and frame of your bike.

If you want to find out a bit more on the new aerosols from Torque Engineering, call or write to:

TORQUE ENGINEERING
19755 BAHAMA ST.
NORTHRIDGE, CA 91324
(213) 882-4321

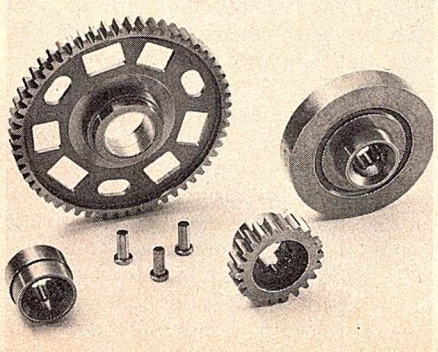


WEBCOOL

One of the biggest problems with all of the Yamaha mx'ers, is that they slow down when they get hot. The biggest problem is the inefficiency of the head in getting rid of the heat. The size of the head is almost large enough, but evidently the material, or the fin arrangement isn't up to the job.

Most of the accessory heads available today are for the 125s and not for the big bores. Webco has come out with a head that they claim is efficient enough to give better cooling and warrants boosting the compression. If true, you'll have more power for a longer time.

If you feel your 250 or 400 Yammie isn't running as good as it should, then drop a line to the people at Webco and ask about their head. They sell the thing for $48.95 plus all of the usual taxes and such. For more information, call or write to: WEBCO INC., 218 MAIN ST., VENICE, CA 90293 or call (213) 870-7758.



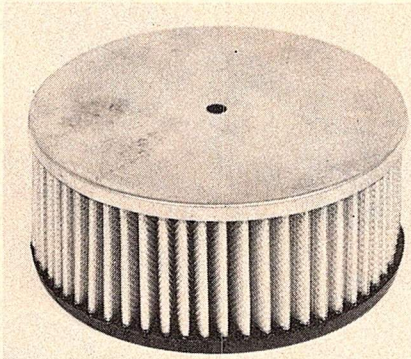
GEARS, STRAIGHT ONES AT THAT

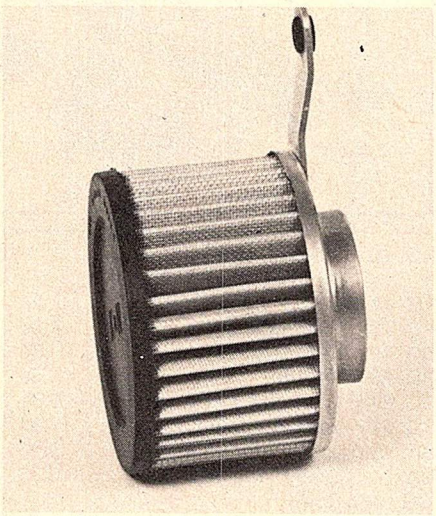
About six years ago, it was the hot setup to put straight cut gears in your AT-1 Yammie. Remember? Those were actually good for the bike. They gave more horsepower, simply because there was less loss from the motor.

Well, they're back. This time from CMS products up in Mountain View. They machine these gears from a solid billet of gear stock. The gears come in two forms; one comes plain and the other comes with a dicronite finish on the teeth. Dicronite is a dry film coating that reduces friction.

If you have a '73 or '74 360 MX Yamaha and want more grunt, then CMS makes a special flywheel that replaces the omni-balance system that comes stock on the bike. This allows the motor to rev higher and smoother. These gears are available for both the 250 and the 360. It will even fit the new 400 MX. For more information on these and other CMS products, call or write to:

CMS PRODUCTS INC.
2134 OLD MIDDLEFIELD WAY
MT. VIEW, CA 94040
(415) 961-2446





FILTERS, FILTERS AND MORE FILTERS

All the new-model Japanese motocross bikes are coming with those light grey foam filters. They're made in Japan and last for about a month. They soon begin to fall apart and if you don't catch them in time, the motor will soon be full of dirt. All of that dirt is going to cut the life of your engine to nothing.

Replacement of these little devils isn't as easy as it could be, but now you have an alternative. If you own a Suzuki RM 125 or a Honda CR 125, K&N has a filter for your bike.

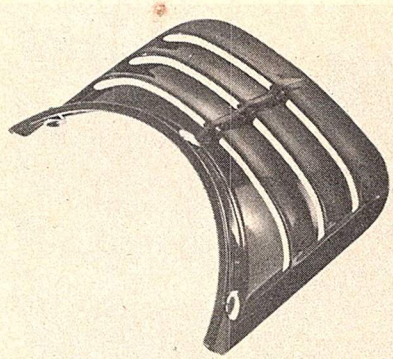
They're the same material as all of the other K&Ns and have all of the same features. Ease of servicing and all that rot.

For the RM, they have a filter for both the kit and the stock air boxes, the only difference being the diameter. The unit for the CR has the mounting arm built in to the filter housing. Both fit into place with no modification to the existing components.

For more information on these filters or whether they make a similar unit for your sled, call or write to:

K&N ENGINEERING
P.O. BOX 1329, DEPT. MC
RIVERSIDE, CA 92502

$ needed to get filters:
RM Stock—$ 8.75
RM Kit —$ 9.30
CR —$11.50



LOUVERED BEAK

How many times have you been tapped out down a fire road, sat up to prepare for a bump and nearly had your head ripped off when the air caught under that duck bill of yours. Long time desert riders have always complained of this and many of them have changed the style of their visor to eliminate the hassle. Now you can have the best of both worlds. This new visor from Simon Says has louvers that allow the air to pass freely through the visor with little resistance. You still have the length of the duck style visor, but now without the whiplash problem.

They come in orange, yellow, blue, black and white. Retail cost is $3.95 plus 50¢ for shipping. To order your Spoiler visor, call or write to:

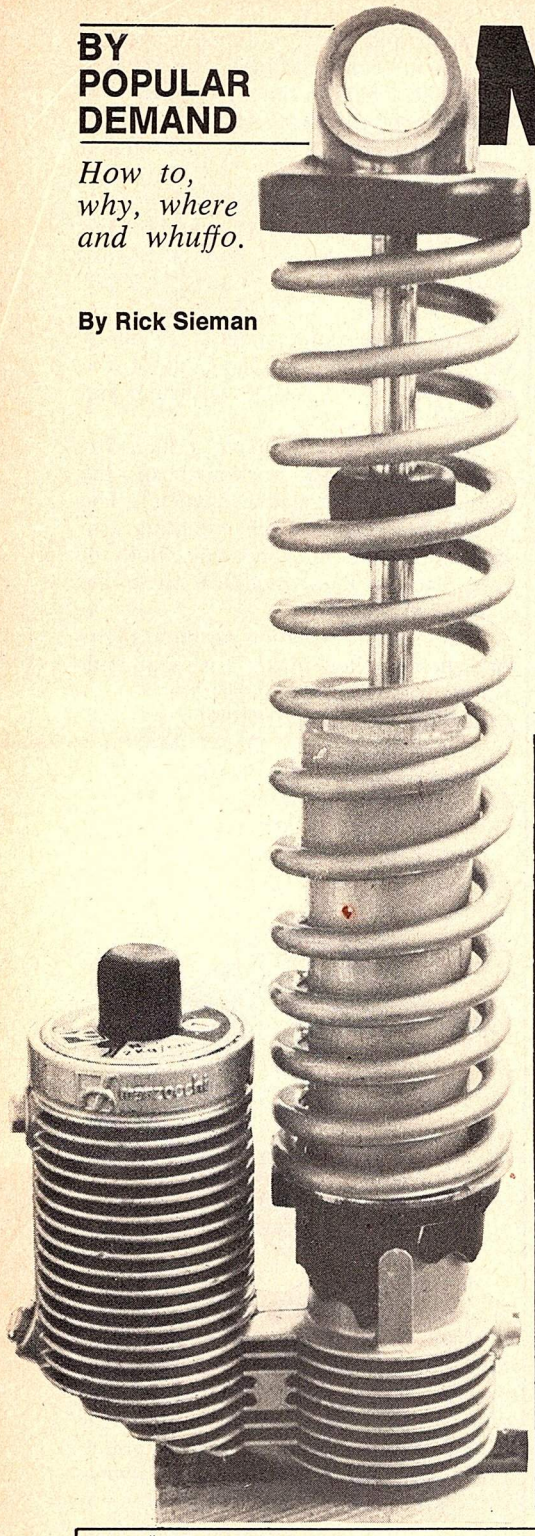
SIMON SAYS YES
8568 MELROSE
LOS ANGELES, CA 90069
(213) 657-7237

BY POPULAR DEMAND

MARZOCCHI

How to, why, where and whuffo.

By Rick Sieman

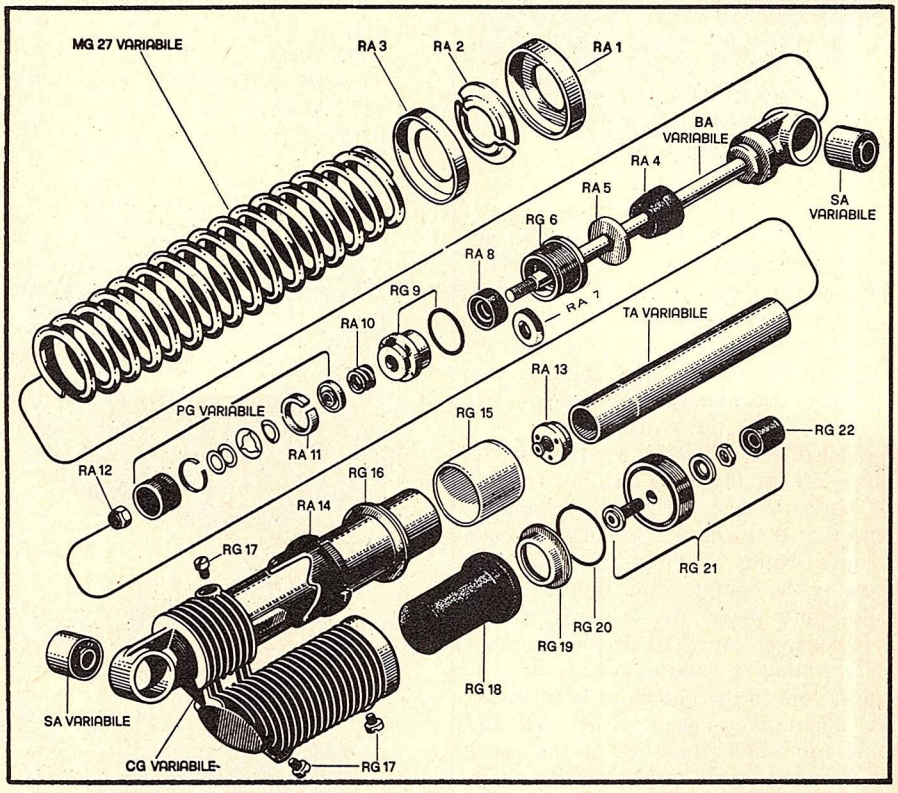


After our recent gas shock comparison article, we got a heavy influx of mail, which didn't surprise us. What did surprise us, was that most of the questions were about the Marzocchi shocks. First off, the name is pronounced "mar-zo-key." We've heard them called everything from macaroni to mazuka and back again.

Secondly, no one seemed to know anything about the shocks. There are three basic types of Marzocchi shocks available. You'll find the markings on the top of the gas reservoir, next to the air valve.

And, not surprisingly, most folks didn't know how to take them apart for servicing or modifications. To answer another question before it's asked, the valves can be changed. Therefore, if you have a Type One shock, you can change it to a Type Three just by replacing the valving.

One thing most folks did not know, was that Marzocchis are also made for conventional suspensions, along with the moved up shocks. And fewer yet knew that the shocks could be run upside down. We got some feedback that the Marzocchis weren't performing for certain applications. As it turned out, in the cases we were able to follow through on, they were simply using the wrong shock for the needed application. And, too many people were springing the shock way too soft. For forward mounted (not cantilever) positions, we've found that 130-140-pound springs with no pre-load do a great job, even for lighter riders. Finding springs to fit the hefty bodies was a problem at first, but we found that the Ken Ross Super Springs (bright yaller) fit OK and have been holding up well. You have to push them firmly over the body, but they have enough room.



Part #	Description	
RA 1	Rubber cap	
RA 2	Clip	
RA 3	Spring cap—set	4.80
RA 4	Rubber plug	.46
RA 5	Washer	.22
RG 6	Cap	2.88
RA 7	Dust scraper	.41
RA 8	Oil seal	1.00
RG 9	Bushing	2.88
RA 10	Spring	.28
RA 11	Scraper—supplied with PG piston	
RA 12	Nut	.30
RA 13	Valve	6.20
RA 14	Spring adjustment	
RG 15	Bushing	.74
RG 16	Washer—supplied with RA 14	
RG 17	Screw	.24
RG 18	Gas chamber	2.80
RG 19	Cap washer	.30
RG 20	Oil ring	.50
RG 21	Valve, plug and cap	5.81
RG 22	Valve cap	.84
SA	Silent block	3.10
BA	Eyelet with rod	8.80
CG	Body	
TA	Tube	6.00
PG	Piston complete—(diff. types)	4.60
MG	Spring—(diff. sizes)	11.00

Parts prices subject to change without notice.

Rebuilding, changing the oil, or just cleaning the shock is fairly simple, with no special tools required. Step at a time, here's how it goes:

1. Remove the spring. This might call for a spring tool, or several strong friends if you're running stiff coils.

2. Before attempting to take the shock apart, the gas in container "S" must be released. Simply press down the

SHOCK SECRETS

pin on the air valve, in the same fashion as letting air out of a tube.

3. Extend the shock rod fully, then carefully unscrew plug "2," the shock cap. After you completely loosen the threaded cap, extract the whole damping unit. This consists of the following:

Plug with gasket "2."
Pilot bush "3"
Rod "4" and piston "5."
Cylinder "6" and foot valve "7."

4. Carefully unscrew the nut "8" that fastens the piston to the rod, keeping it pointed up during the process.

5. Remove the piston unit (piston, blade and ring). Pay special attention to the exact direction and arrangement of the blades. If you get things turned around, the shock will not function properly after reassembly.

6. Remove bush "3" and plug "2."

7. For cleaning of these parts, use extremely clean gasoline and a soft haired brush. Clean and air dry the parts with compressed air. Valve "7" doesn't have to be disassembled all the way down. If you insist on total disassembly, special care should be taken to keep all the parts in their correct order and facing in the right direction. Don't say we didn't warn you. Make sure you use a brush that doesn't shed hair, as one single hair could alter the operation of the shock. Additionally, make sure that no dirt, or lint is allowed in the shock. This is critical.

8. Upon changing the gaskets (when needed) pay special attention to the disassembly and reassembly.

9. Remove screw "9."

10. Unscrew plug "10" and remove all parts connected with the compensating unit.

11. Clean everything thoroughly and lay the entire works out on a clean sheet of paper. It isn't necessary to disassemble valve "1 " as this is merely an air valve.

GAS REAR SHOCKS REGULAR MOUNTING

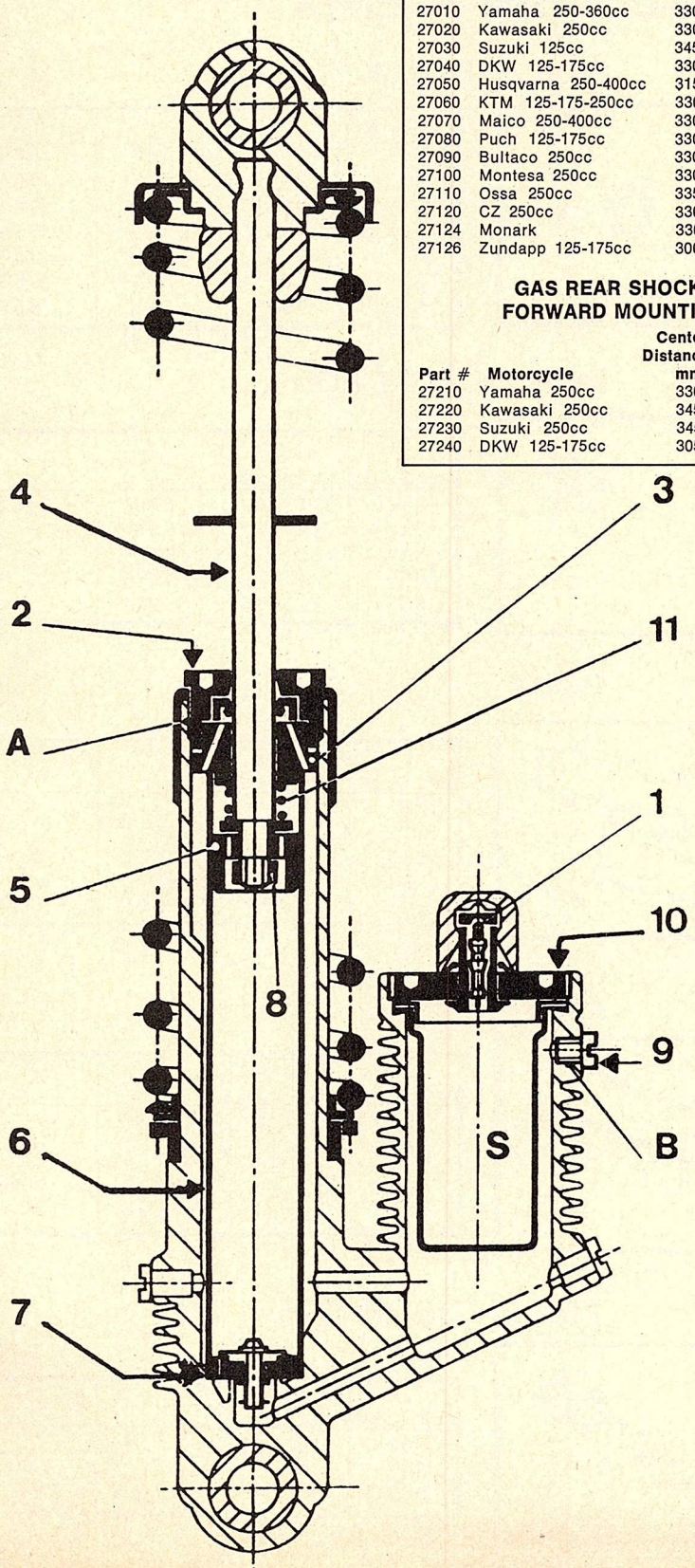
Part #	Motorcycle	Center Distance mm	Valve	Spring No.
27000	Honda 250cc Elsinore	360	F1	27.50
27010	Yamaha 250-360cc	330	F1	27.31
27020	Kawasaki 250cc	330	F1	27.32
27030	Suzuki 125cc	345	F2	27.39
27040	DKW 125-175cc	330	F1	27.30
27050	Husqvarna 250-400cc	315	F1	27.20
27060	KTM 125-175-250cc	330	F1	27.32
27070	Maico 250-400cc	330	F1	27.32
27080	Puch 125-175cc	330	F1	27.31
27090	Bultaco 250cc	330	F1	27.30
27100	Montesa 250cc	330	F1	27.32
27110	Ossa 250cc	335	F1	27.31
27120	CZ 250cc	330	F1	27.31
27124	Monark	330	F1	27.30
27126	Zundapp 125-175cc	300	F1	27.06

GAS REAR SHOCKS FORWARD MOUNTING

Part #	Motorcycle	Center Distance mm	Valve	Spring No.
27210	Yamaha 250cc	330	F2	27.33
27220	Kawasaki 250cc	345	F2	27.41
27230	Suzuki 250cc	345	F2	27.41
27240	DKW 125-175cc	305	F1	27.06
27250	Husqvarna 250-400cc	330	F2	27.33
27260	KTM 175-250cc	330	F2	27.33
27261	KTM 400—250 cross	345	F2	27.41
27262	Montesa 250cc	345	F2	27.41
27263	KTM 400cc cross	345	F3	27.42
27270	Maico 250-400cc	345	F2	27.41
27281	Puch 250cc	330	F2	27.33
27290	Bultaco 250cc	330	F2	27.33
27310	Ossa	345	F2	27.41
27320	CZ 250cc	345	F2	27.41

SPRINGS FOR GAS REAR SHOCKS

Part #	Lbs.	Center Distance	Spring Color	Wire Dia. mm
27.19	90	315		6.50
27.20	100	315	Silver	6.75
27.22	115	315	Blue	7.00
27.23	125	315	Dark Blue	7.20
27.21	140	315	Black	7.50
27.30	80	330		6.50
27.31	90	330	Silver	6.75
27.32	100	330	Blue	7.00
27.34	122	330	Dark Blue	7.20
27.33	135	330	Black	7.50
27.35	145	330	Purple	7.75
27.38	90	345	Silver	6.75
27.39	100	345	Blue	7.00
27.40	115	345	Dark Blue	7.20
27.41	125	345	Black	7.50
27.42	135	345	Purple	7.75
27.50		360		7.00



REASSEMBLY

12. Reassemble the compensating unit first, taking care to get all the parts in the right arrangement and direction. Tighten plug "10" down firmly, but don't overtighten. This is aluminum and can strip out the threads easily.

13. Clamp the lower shock eye in a vise lightly and angle the shock about 20 degrees from vertical and pour the oil in the top of the shock body at point "A," until it comes out of hole "B," then put the screw "9" back in its hole.

14. Put the shock back in a vertical position and insert the cylinder "6," with the foot valve "7" in place. Then, fill up the shock body once more to the upper rim of the cylinder.

15. Insert the piston (assembled with bush "3" and plug "2") into the cylinder while keeping the rod entirely out, so that the piston, spring and bush are all combined. After inserting the piston, place the lower rim of the bush "3" into the cylinder, then screw the plug "2" firmly in.

16. Load the compensating unit "S" up with gas, through valve 1.

17. Put the spring and clips back into place.

18. The shocks may be charged with air if nitrogen is not available. Charge at 28 p.s.i. Nitrogen: 2 kg/sq.m.

19. When charging the gas unit, be extremely careful not to overfill, as this may cause the chamber to burst. It's advisable to use a hand pump, rather than a compressor.

20. You can experiment with various viscosities of oils, but will probably get greater consistency with lighter fluids, like Bel-Ray Lt-100, Lt-200, or ATF.

21. One last thing . . . if you change poppets, you should change the foot valve to match. Few people know this fact.

WHERE TO GET IT:

MIDWEST:

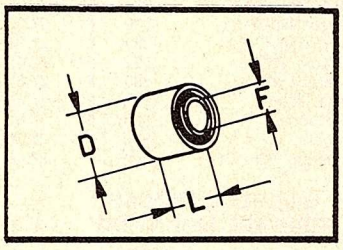
KRAUSE COMPETITION CYCLES
305 E. North Ave.
Northlake, IL 60164
(312) 344-2233

USA IMPORTERS:

COSMOPOLITAN MOTORS, INC.
Jacksonville & Meadowbrook Roads
Hatboro, Pa.
(215) 672-9100

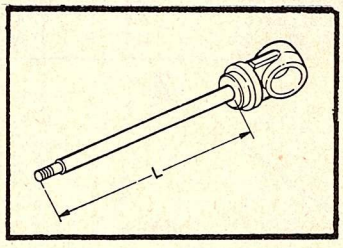
VARIABLE COMPONENTS

SA SILENT BLOCK



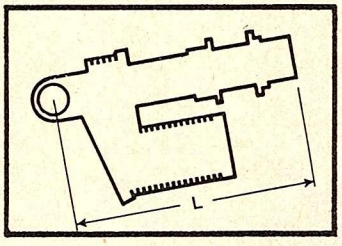
Article	L	F	D
SA1	.906"	.394"	.985"
SA2	.906"	.473"	.985"
SA3	.906"	.552"	.985"
SA4	.906"	.355"	.985"
SA5	.906"	.315"	.985"
SA6	.827"	.394"	.985"
SA8	.750"	.315"	.985"

BA EYELET WITH ROD



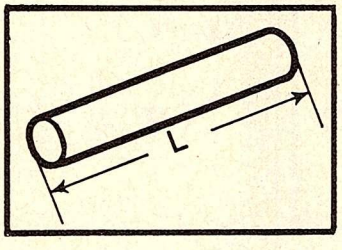
Article	Shock Length	L	
BA2	11.8"	5.670"	
BA3	12.4"	5.906"	
BA4	12.9"	6.300"	
BA6	13.5"	6.457"	
BA7	14.1"	6.693"	

CG BODY



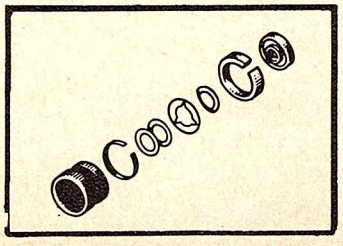
Article	Shock Length	L	
CG1	11.8"	5.827"	
CG2	12.4"	6.182"	
CG3	12.9"	6.457"	
CG4	13.5"	6.654"	
CG5	14.1"	6.930"	

TA TUBE



Article	Shock Length	L	
TA2	11.8"	4.961"	
TA3	12.4"	5.315"	
TA4	12.9"	5.590"	
TA5	13.5"	5.788"	
TA6	14.1"	6.063"	

PG PISTON COMPLETE



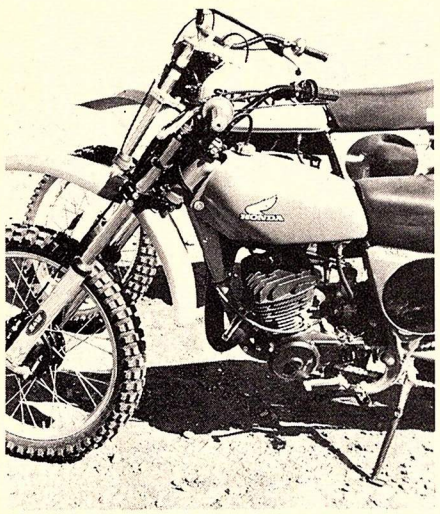
Article	Damp. Type		
PG1	F1		
PG2	F2		
PG3	F3		

SHOOTOUT!
MOTOCROSSERS
MEET

HONDA CR 250 VS. SUZUKI RM 250

Mellow yellow meets the toggle switch.

BY the Editors of MODERN CYCLE



A comparison test between these two bikes? Sure. Why not? After all, they're both in the same game, playing under the same rules. They retail for about the same bag of money—and liberal discounts can be found on both machines in many areas of the country. Both bikes are new—at least that's what we're told in the ads.

Obviously, the RM 250 Suzuki is new; even the most casual observer can tell you that it doesn't resemble the old Challenger in any manner whatsoever.

Visually, at least, the Honda is new. A flashy coat of red paint can make almost any bike look new. But, the ads assure us, the Honda is much newer than the fresh color. Lookee here: gas shocks on the back and better forks

up front. And the whole package is supposed to handle better, too.

So, with these things in mind, what we're trying to find out here is two-fold: Firstly, is the Honda changed enough to merit the "new" label. And, secondly, how do the two bikes stack up against each other?

The first place they got a close comparison was on the scales. Here, they're within a pound of each other, with the yellow Suzuki being one pound heavier at 215 dry, compared to the 214 pounds of the Honda. Strangely, this is exactly what the Elsinore weighed when it came out three years ago.

At that time, 214 pounds was a shocker—nothing else was even in the ball park. Now, there are several bikes that weigh approximately that and a few even lighter. The Ossa and the Bultaco, for instance, both come in right at 200 pounds.

After we spent some time with the two bikes, however, we found out that the scales were one of the few places the bikes were equal.

To give a complete and fair comparison, let's take the machines one area at a time and see how they perform.

. Forks. No contest here. Not only are the Suzuki forks superior in action, but they have an inch and a half more travel than the Honda. And, perhaps even more importantly, the Suzuki forks do not flex as much as the Honda's. While the Honda forks are no where near as bad as the flexi-flyers from Yamaha, a certain disquieting amount of flex can be felt under certain circumstances. Deep sand and mud let you know right away. And when side loads are applied, the Honda forks do wiggle somewhat.

The Honda fork internals are different from the old original Elsinore forks, but not different than last year's bike —which was called the M-1 model. This new red bike is referred to as the M-2. The tech people at American Honda are referring to the original Elsinore unofficially as the M-O.

Both bikes could use more sensitivity on small ripple bumps, but the Suzuki *does* stroke quite well on deep harsh bumps. You can set the Honda forks up to respond well over the small bumps by using ATF (or even a lighter fluid) in the tubes, but then they get too soft at the end of the stroke and bottoming tends to occur too easily. In order to keep the forks from bottoming out, a heavier oil must be used. Then, the Honda forks tend to "hydraulic," or lock-up momentarily on sharp edged bumps. Both bikes have a slight tendency to rebound from a sharp drop-away jump with too much violence.

Still, all things considered, the Suzuki forks are decent units that work well and will prove to be sufficient for all

but the most demanding riders. We also found out a little trick to do to the Suzy forks that make them nearly flawless. Look for a tech article on this next month.

To improve the Honda forks, you're going to have to spend some money on one or another accessory kit. We installed a set of S&W dampers and springs in the Honda and ended up with a primo set of forks. There's a tech article on that particular project somewhere in this issue—hopefully.

Shocks. Gas Kayabas now come on all of the Suzuki MXers and gas Hondas come on the Elsinore. The big difference is in the actual rear wheel travel on the two bikes. The Suzuki has 8½ inches of travel, while the Honda is forced to get by with a mere five inches. Even if the action of the two shocks was identical—which it isn't—the Honda would still be hurting because of the limited travel. Five inches of rear wheel movement is history today.

Suzuki has a strange approach to handle the severe angle of their radically cantilevered shocks: they use two springs of different rates. The first spring is a 76 pounder and the second is a 233 pounder. In theory, the light spring is supposed to give you a nice soft ride and the giant spring is there to handle the bike swallowing holes. True, it does this to a certain extent, but the transition from the light spring to the heavy spring brings some slight problems with it.

We found that only very light riders could ride the Suzuki with the pre-load in the softest position. All other riders had to go to the full pre-load position to keep the rear end from sliding around exiting corners. This is a common trait of rear ends that are sprung too softly. Unfortunately, after a few hours of hard use on the Kayaba shocks, the riders found that they needed more preload to keep the rear end action correct—and no more is to be had. A small number of shops are now making additional pre-load spacers for the Kayaba shocks. Some of the riders pre-load the spring so much that they begin to lose some travel, but this is preferable to having the rear end move around too much.

Sadly, all of this pre-load business is a stop-gap; nothing more. Even though the Kayabas are gas charged shocks, they do start to fade in about 15 to 20 minutes, depending on the track condition and the skill level of the rider. Still, even when the Kayabas do fade, they're better than most other shocks. Ultimately, however, the rider will face the fact that he must get an accessory set of shocks if he is to indulge in anything longer than 20-minute motos.

This presents the rider with something of a problem. Because the Su-

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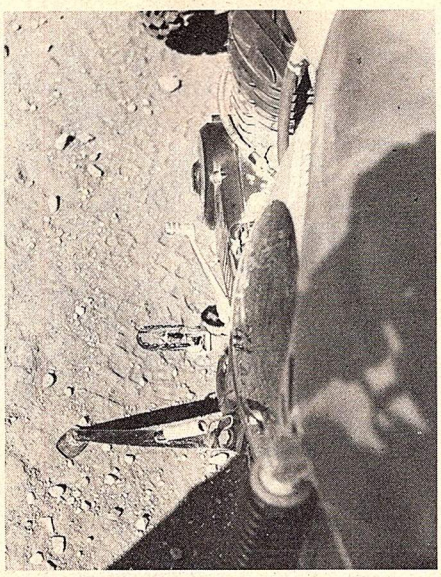

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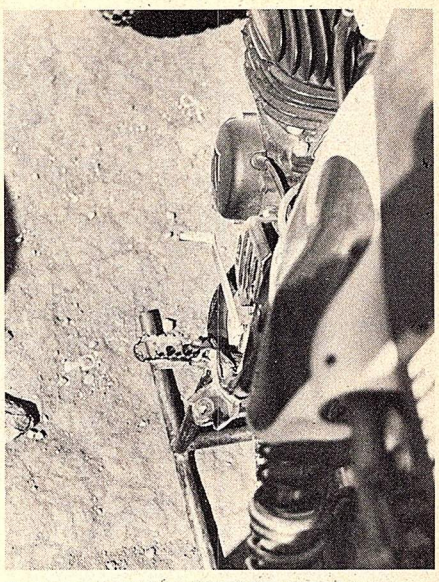

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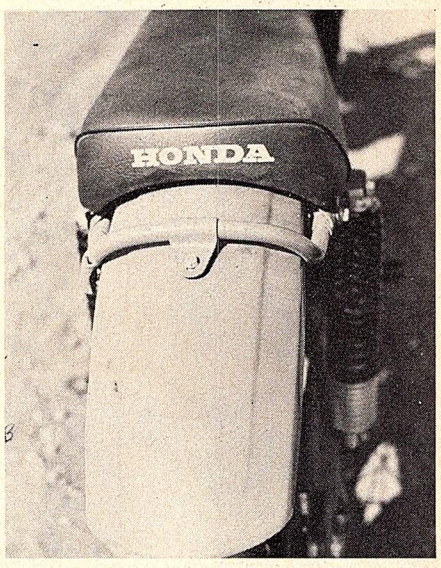

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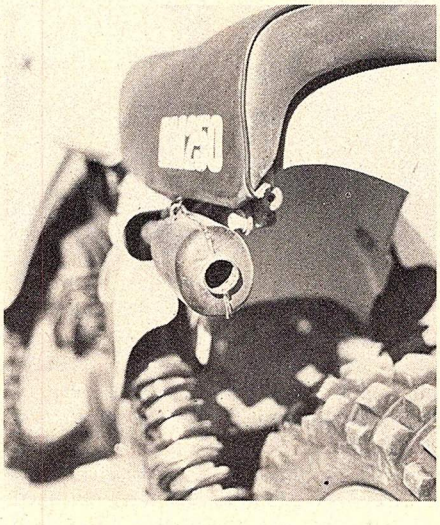

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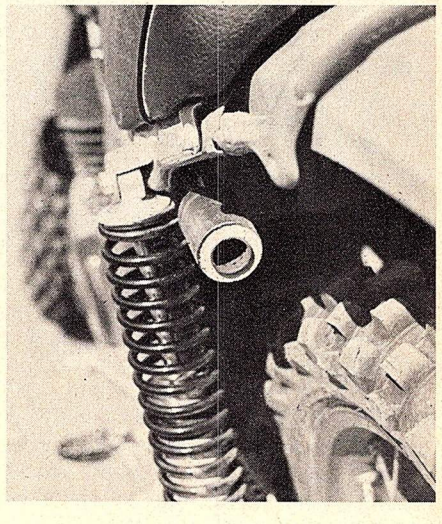
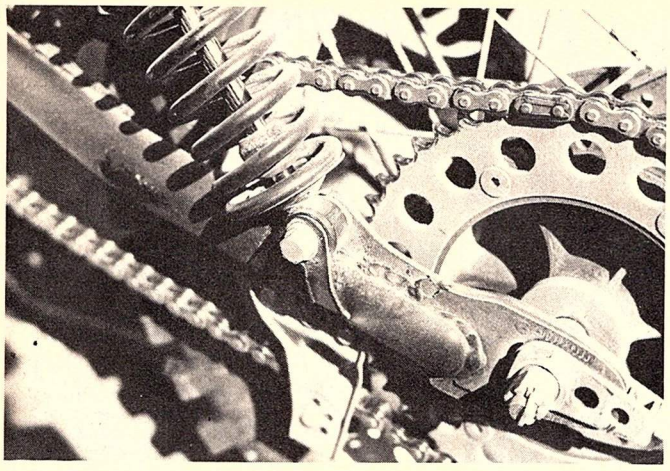


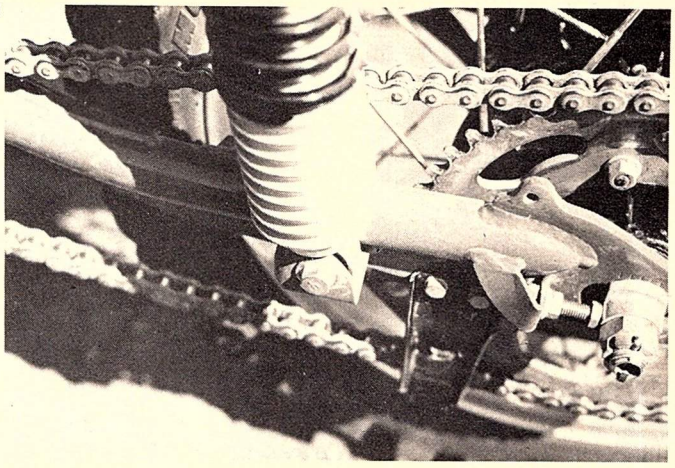
1 Honda shift lever stuck out quite far compared to the Suzy unit.

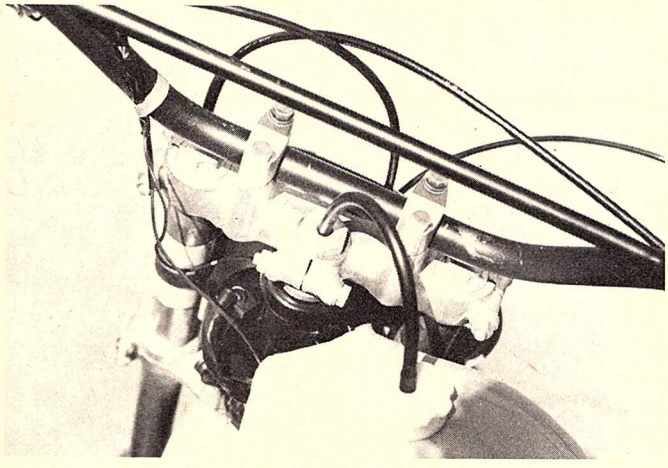
2 Suzuki's lower frame cradle gave a measure of protection to the lever, yet the lever was still natural to reach.

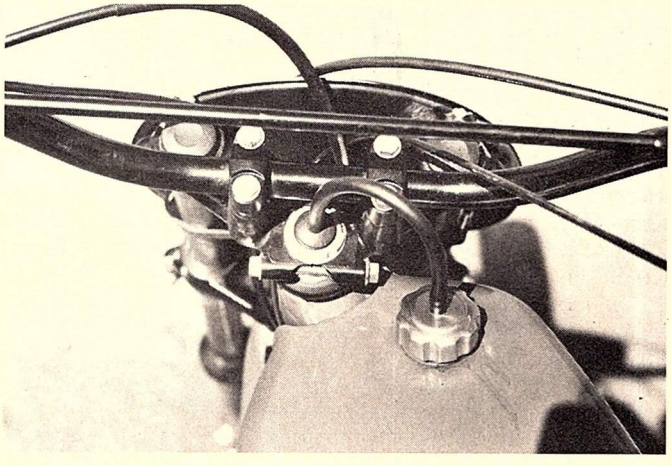
3 Both fenders were of excellent and very tough plastic; Suzuki had no frame rail over the back, while the Honda featured a rubber mounted unit under a loop.

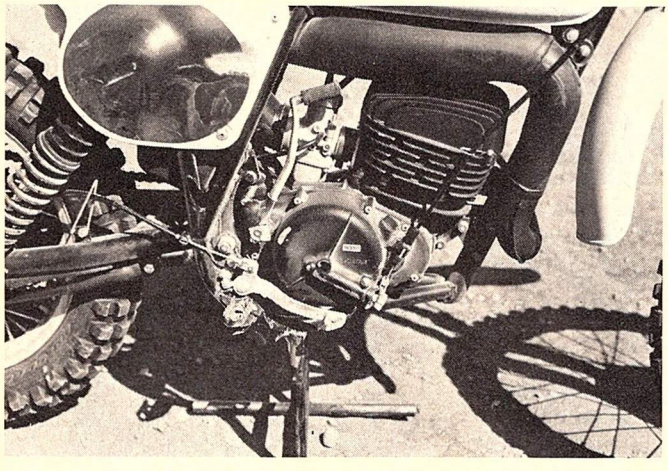
4 Both bikes featured high pipes with nicely tucked in piping. Honda silencer was much louder than the Suzuki, but came with an optional silencer that weighed a ton, robbed performance and did quiet the bike down. As per usual practice, rear pipe bracket on the Suzuki broke; the Honda stayed intact.

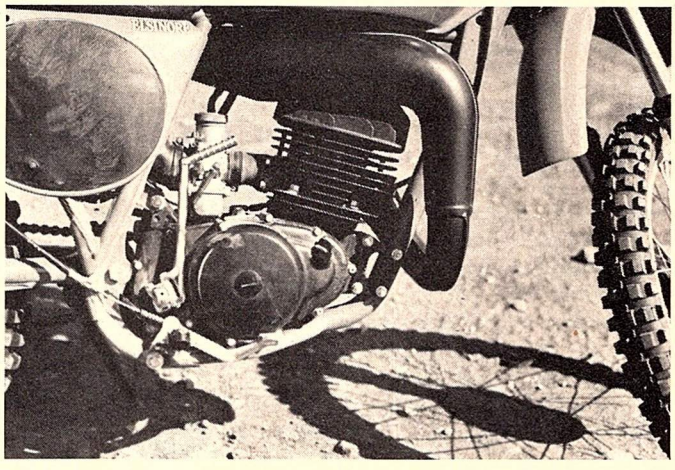












zuki shocks are so long (15½ inches), you can't just run out and buy a pair of bolt-ons from your friendly neighborhood dealer. We used Works Performance shocks on both our 250 and 370 RM Suzukis with great success. These were pre-production units, though, and were not available to the general public at the time. Perhaps by the time you read this, they will be available. Strangely, our Suzukis only required 100-pound springs with the Works Performance shocks, a huge difference from the heavily sprung Suzuki Kayabas. The Works Performance shocks depend on compression damping, rather than heavy springs to do the work. All the springs do, according to Gil (the designer of the shocks), is hold the bike up. Damping supplies the control and dictates wheel action.

This is the same approach taken by S&W on their new shocks, too. We have some of the new long S&W's coming for our Suzuki in the near future, but couldn't obtain a set in time for this test.

Luckily, though, we did get a set of S&W's for the Honda. It sorely needed help. During the first riding/photo session, all of the test riders complained that the Honda was bouncing severely. Nobody liked the shocks much.

We tried to find out as much as we could about the new Honda shocks, but not much information was to be had. Then a bit of luck entered into the picture. As we were studying the Honda manual in an attempt to learn how to adjust the shock, Jim Mercier noted that the internals looked a great deal like the internals of the old Honda shocks. We broke out our copy of *MC* with the shock rebuild article and sure enough! the internals were identical. All Honda did was make a different body and add an air valve to the new steel body. And, of course, the seals were beefed up. But the actual valving was identical.

Now, it's not wrong for a company to use as many old parts as they can in the name of economics. Take a look at the Yamahas of the last seven or eight years. But it appears that Honda has taken a step backwards with their "new" gas shock. The old style conventional Elsinore didn't work all that bad until it got hot and faded. And it was simple and relatively light. This

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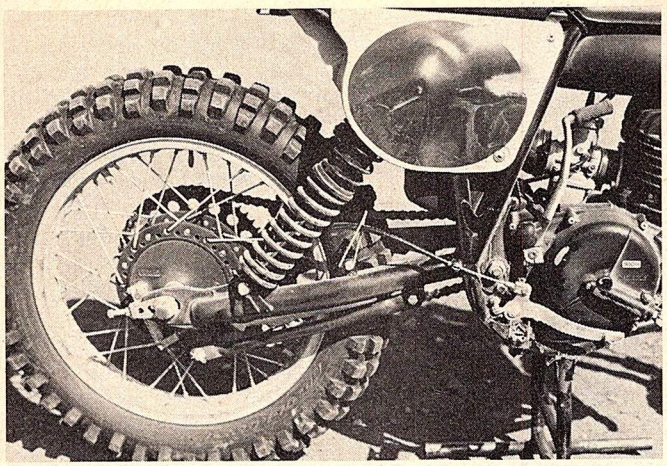

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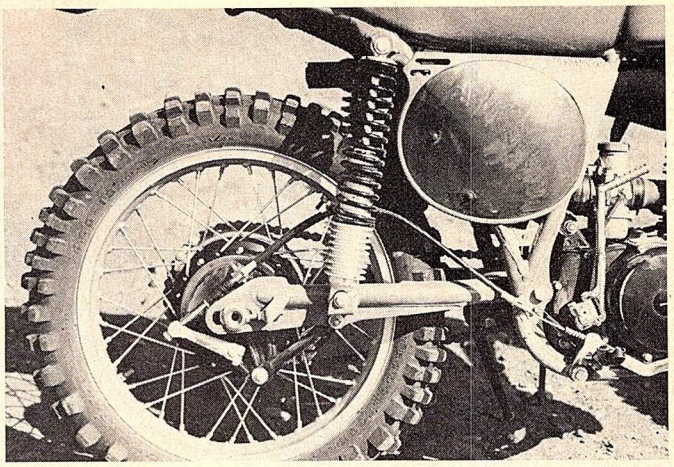

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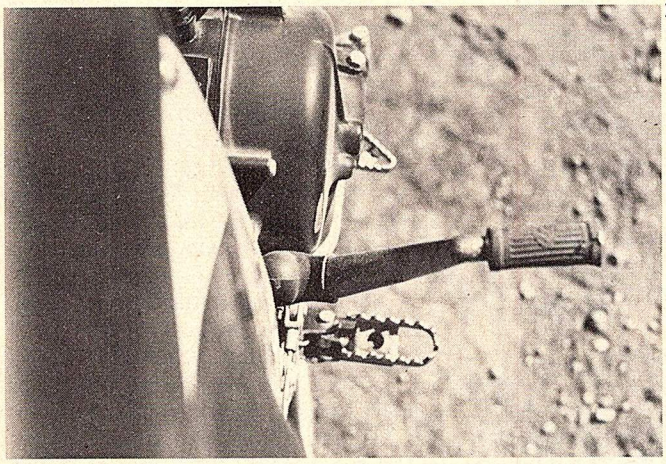

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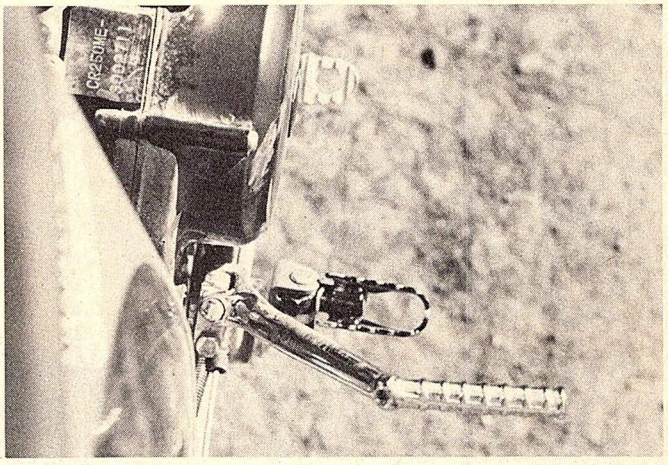

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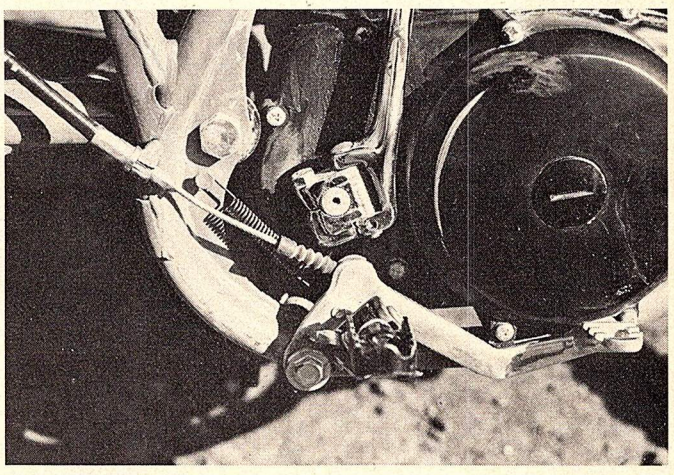


1 Both swingarms were heavily gusseted. Suzuki did not flex much.

2 Honda arm didn't bend, but flex could be felt when the bike was pushed.

3 Clamps on both bikes were clean and strong. Suzuki had straight across triple clamps to go with the forward axle.

4 Honda assembly had black paint that stayed on; set up featured ordinary placement of tubes.

5 Suzuki pipe was well tucked in and didn't burn anyone.

6 Honda pipe got some of the test riders a bit toasty on the inner thigh when sliding forward on the tank for cornering. Both pipes were excellent, though, and neither developed any fatigue or vibration cracks.

7 Suzuki had full radical cantilever rear end with Kayaba gas shocks. They held up for 15-20 minutes, then faded.

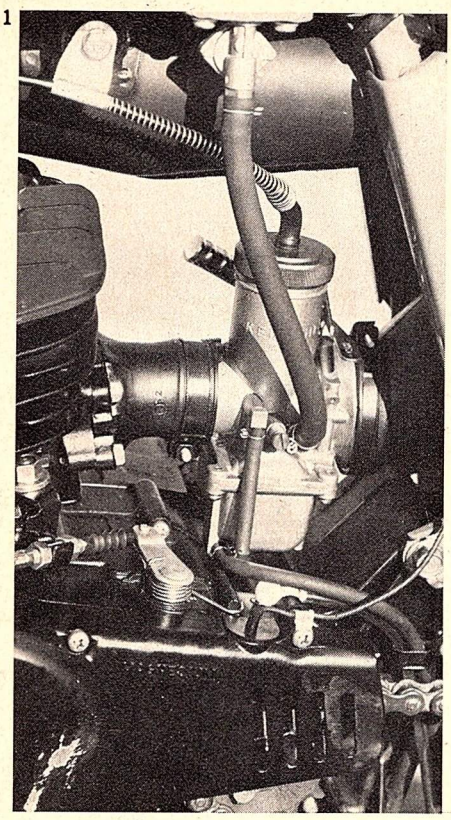
8 Honda rear end was very conservative and had three inches less travel than the Suzy. Top eye location is identical to the '72 Elsinore. Shocks are not really new and use components from older MO and M1 series hardware. Outer body and seals are only difference.

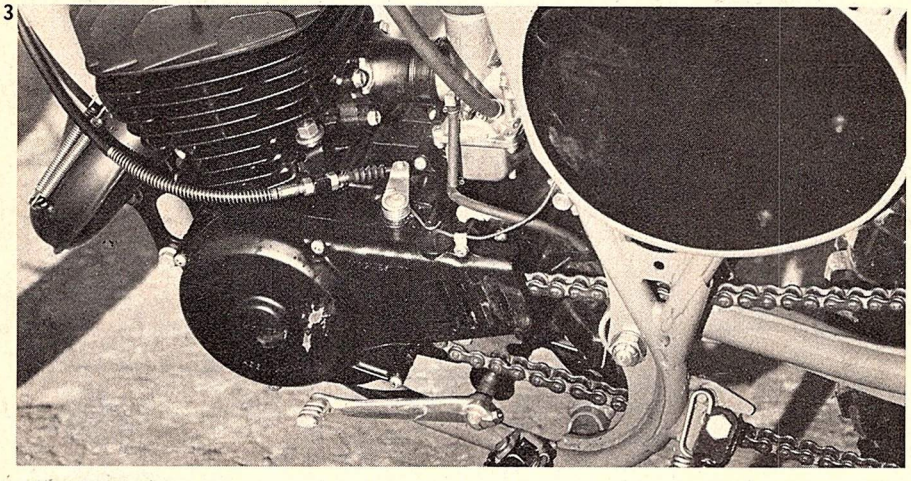
9 Right side of Honda. Kickstarter stuck out more than the Suzuki and folded up irritatingly at the bottom of the stroke. Case and lever bulge rubbed against rider's foot.

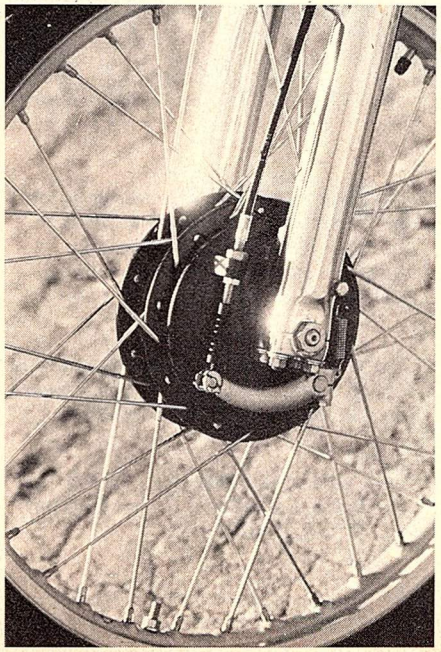
10 Suzuki starter tucked in better; had nice rubber cover. Foot placement was more comfortable under most conditions.

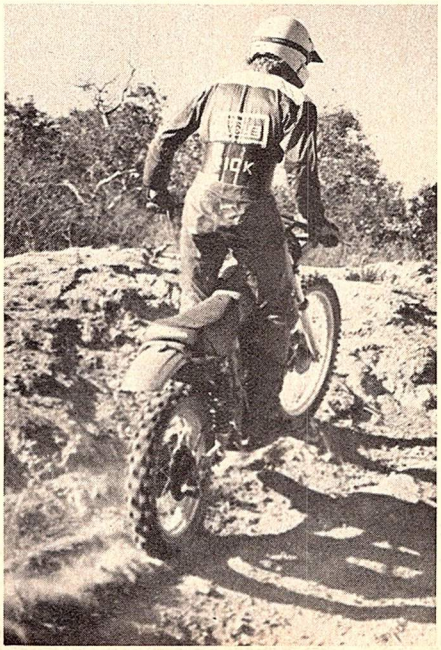
11 Some riders had difficulty locating the Suzuki brake lever for the first few laps, then got used to it.

12 Honda lever was perfectly placed. It's the best in the business; you can't miss it and it's well tucked in.









variation on that old shock is horribly difficult to work on and doesn't perform as well as the shock it's derived from. The only advantage it seems to offer is that it doesn't fade.

To give you an idea of the problems associated with the new shock, check this: You have to take the shock off the bike to check or adjust the pressure. If you put a gauge on it with the shock on the bike, oil will spurt out. Additionally, the internal pressures required are very high; much higher in fact, than most commercial air compressors are capable of attaining. You'll need at least 140 pounds in each shock if you're a light rider and well over 200 pounds if you're of average weight. Honda also insists that you use Nitrogen only in the unit, but we know that air will do the job nearly as well. The springs, by the way, are identical to the old springs.

Why Honda didn't go to a springless shock is beyond us. That way, they could have mounted the air valve high up on the shock body and eliminated removal for checking or adjustment.

As it stands now, the Honda shock has all the drawbacks of both shock concepts and, quite frankly, none of the advantages. Why they just didn't make a larger capacity body with gas bag cells in it, escapes us. At least the old shock worked well until it faded. This one never felt right, no matter how much we fiddled with it. Oh yes. We had the bike delivered to us with no pressure in one shock and thirty pounds in the other one, so you can expect to have problems with many of these units even if you choose not to play with them. You may not have a choice.

We, luckily, did have a choice. Again, S&W supplied us with another answer to our suspension problems. They shipped us a pair of the new aluminum bodied, freon celled shocks made specifically for Hondas. While these were

1 Honda carb had flip lever choke, while Suzuki had pull-pin type Mikuni. Carb had fixed-needle jet; corrections could be made only by changing needle position, allowing only limited tuning range.

2 Rear knobby on the Honda is still the stagger knobbed wonder they've been giving you. You wonder why it works so bad.

3 Honda frame is stronger in the critical areas around the swingarm pivot. This used to be a weak spot in the MO and M1 series machines.

4 Honda front wheel assembly was light and strong; brake hubs appeared to be identical, with only minor changes in backing plate and external hardware.

5 Ricky Salmon said the Honda was fun to ride, "But it moved around too much to get confident on it."

HONDA CR 250 M2

NAME AND MODEL ..... Honda CR 250 M2 Elsinore
PRICE, SUGGESTED RETAIL $1313
MOTOR ..... Single cylinder, air cooled, piston port two cycle
BORE/STROKE 70.0/64.4mm
DISPLACEMENT 248cc
COMPRESSION RATIO 7.2:1
HORSEPOWER (ACTUAL) .... 28.6 at 7800 rpm
CARBURETION ..... 34mm Kehin
STANDARD JETTING FROM FACTORY:
- MAIN JET ..... #155
- NEEDLE JET ..... Fixed
- NEEDLE ..... 5 way adjustable
- PILOT JET ..... #55
- NEEDLE POSITION ..... Varies
- AIR SCREW (TURNS) .. 2 turns plus/minus ¼

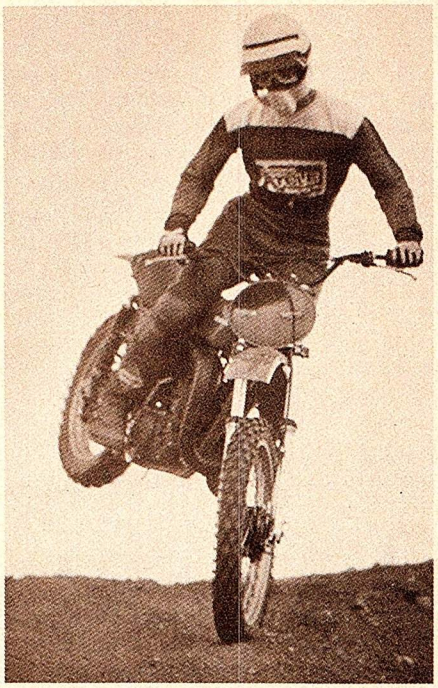
IGNITION ..... Internal rotor with points
RECOMMENDED SPARK PLUG .... B9EV NGK
TIMING ..... 2.3mm BTDC
PRIMARY DRIVE ..... Gear
FINAL DRIVE ..... 520 chain
GEAR RATIOS:
1. 2.055:1
2. 1.571:1
3. 1.250:1
4. 1.038:1
5. 0.082:1
6. None

AIR FILTRATION SYSTEM Wet foam in air box
LUBRICATION ..... Pre-mix
RECOMMENDED OIL AND RATIO OF MIX ..... SAE 40 wt. at 20:1
FUEL TANK CAPACITY ..... 6.8 litre
OIL TANK CAPACITY (IF ANY) ..... None
RECOMMENDED GASOLINE (FACTORY) Premium
FRAME (TYPE) ..... Single down tube, double cradle
WHEELBASE ..... 56.5 in.
STEERING HEAD ANGLE ..... 58 degrees
TRAIL ..... 5.8 in.
GROUND CLEARANCE ..... 9.6 in.
SEAT HEIGHT ..... 33.9 in.
FRONT SUSPENSION ..... Telescopic fork, 7.1 in. travel
REAR SUSPENSION ..... Swingarm with fwd. mount shocks, 5 in. travel
WHEELS:
- FRONT ..... 21 in. shoulderless DID
- REAR ..... 18 in. shoulderless DID

TIRES:
- FRONT ..... 3.00x21 4 ply
- REAR ..... 4.00x18 4 ply

BRAKES/HUBS:
- REAR ..... Semi-conical, internal expanding
- FRONT .... Straight hub, internal expanding

FUEL TANK MATERIAL ..... Aluminum
FENDER MATERIAL ..... Plastic, very nice
WEIGHT (ACTUAL) ..... 214 lbs.
EXHAUST SYSTEM ..... Up-swept pipe with built in silencer
SILENCER/SPARK ARRESTER..Accessory spark arrester, heavy and power robber
STARTER (KICK, ELECTRIC, LOCATION) ..... Right side kick
PRIMARY START ..... Yes
GUARANTEE ..... None other than manufacturer defects
INTENDED PURPOSE OF BIKE (FROM MANUFACTURER) ..... Motocross
COUNTRY OF MANUFACTURER ..... Japan



slightly longer than the stocker, C. H. Wheat (the shock pro) assured us that it would help the Elsinore turn, rather than hurt it.

As usual, the man was right. Our ride became as plush as the Suzuki and no fade at all was encountered. Too, some additional travel was picked up with the slightly longer S&W shocks. We only used 100-pound springs, but never experienced bottoming. Like the Works Performance shocks, the S&Ws rely heavily on compression damping to do the job. And, like the WP shocks, they have a blow-by system to handle the spike pressures generated by square bumps. The combination of the changed front and rear made the Elsinore very pleasant to take over the rough stuff. Stock, the bike was a bummer, unless the surface was ideal.

The chassis on both bikes seemed right. In particular, the Suzuki was a fine line steerer. None of the old front end wash out was present in this Elsinore and considering the wretched tires, this was a minor miracle.

As you know by now (if you've been reading this magazine), power affects handling to a great extent. The smooth delivery of the Suzuki's motor allowed it to exit turns without hassle, while the Elsinore twitched, wiggled and swung the rear end all over the place. You can roll the RM 250 on; you flip the toggle switch on the Elsinore. The Honda seems to blast on in one big convulsive spurt, much of it wasted in wheelspin, while the Suzuki can be dialed on to suit the track conditions.

As with most of our SoCal tracks, our private test track is bone dry most of the time. Here, the Honda is next to useless. Sure, you make a lot of noise and the engine is screaming all the time, but you just don't get enough forward motion. Where the Elsinore is in second gear and spinning wildly, the Suzuki is in third gear, getting traction and moving forward.

We spent a lot of time correcting the Honda from one throttle blast after another. Yes, you can shift up and sort of torque the Honda, but it responds just a bit too flatly to make good use of it. The only place you appreciate the Honda's power, is when the track is very tacky with lots of traction. Then, you'll have to fight to keep the front end down. If the Honda had the Suzuki's motor in it, we're sure the steering and manners in corners would be correct. But that toggle switch power works against the rider most of the time.

If you had to give labels to the handling, you'd have to say that the Suzuki 250 steers like a Maico and the Honda steers like a YZ Yamaha. Strangely, the Suzuki feels much heavier when turning, while a nod of one's head is enough to start the Elsinore turning. However, the Suzuki is far more stable under high cornering loads than the CR 250.

Straight line handling over bumps was the same, once our Honda got the S&W suspenders, but in stock trim, the Suzuki was far superior. Because of the limited rear end travel, the Honda was unhappy over whoopers. It took a lot of work on the riders' part to keep the Elsinore tracking straight. In fact, that seemed to be the general opinion of the testers: you could ride the Honda around the track almost as fast as the Suzuki. You just had to work twice as hard.

Both engines put out about the same horsepower on the dyno and the power curve was quite similar on paper, with

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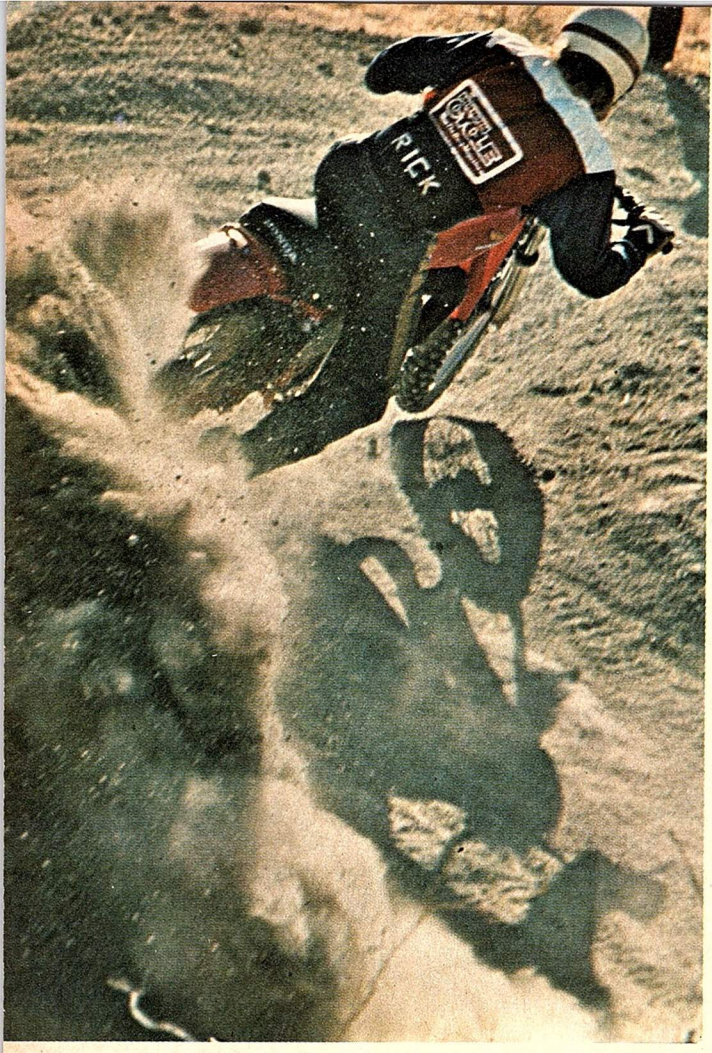
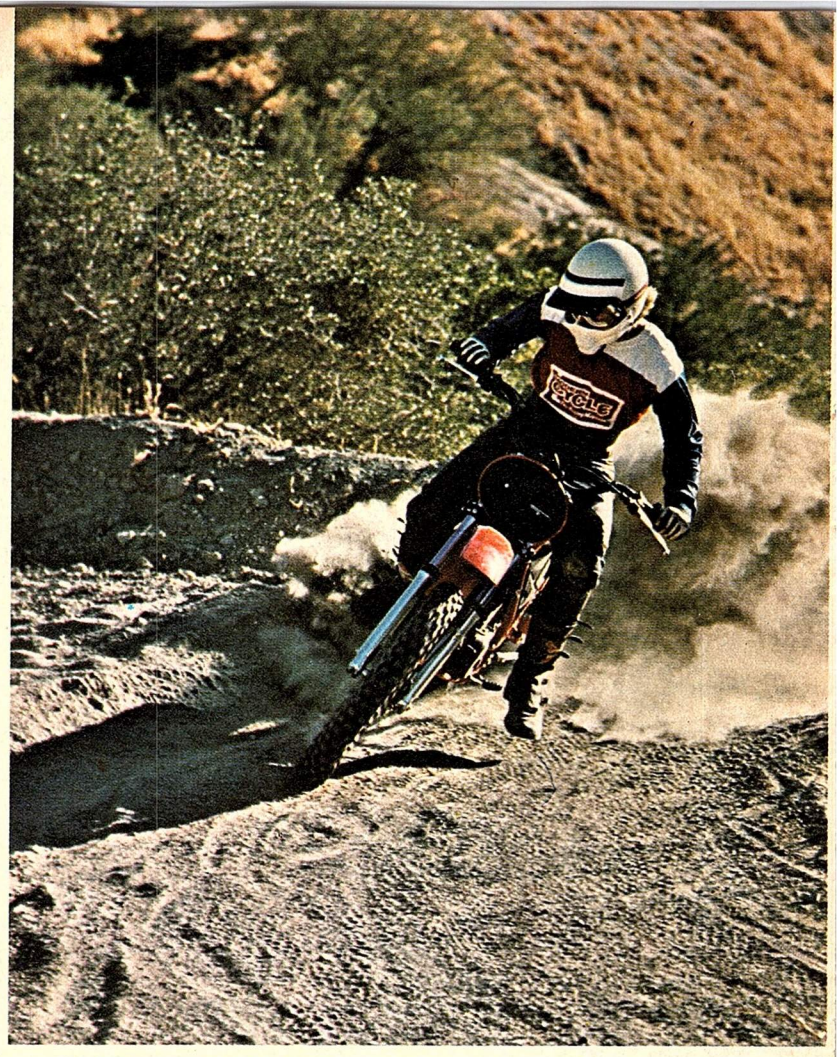

RICK



RICK

Only reason we ran this photo of Mercier is because he wouldn't let anyone else ride his bike.

SUZUKI RM 250

NAME AND MODEL ..... Suzuki RM 250
PRICE, SUGGESTED RETAIL $1395
MOTOR ..... Single cylinder, piston port with boost reed, air cooled two cycle
BORE/STROKE ..... 70 x 64mm
DISPLACEMENT 246cc
COMPRESSION RATIO 7.1:1
HORSEPOWER (ACTUAL) ..... 30 at 8000 rpm
CARBURETION ..... VM 36 Mikuni
STANDARD JETTING FROM FACTORY:
- MAIN JET ..... #310
- NEEDLE JET ..... Q-O
- NEEDLE 6FJ6-4
- PILOT JET ..... #45
- NEEDLE POSITION 2nd
- AIR SCREW (TURNS) ..... 1½ turns

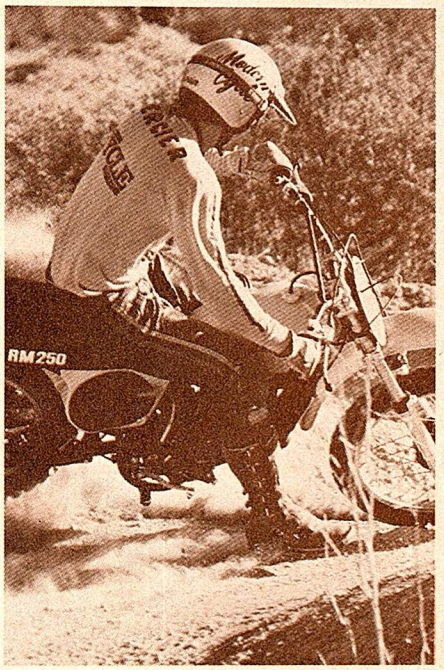
IGNITION ..... PEI system
RECOMMENDED SPARK PLUG .... B9EV NGK
TIMING AND PLUG GAP .... 23° BTDC at 6000
PRIMARY DRIVE ..... Gear
FINAL DRIVE ..... 520 chain D.I.D.
GEAR RATIOS:
1. 2.076:1
2. 1.750:1
3. 1.352:1
4. 1.105:1
5. 0.913:1
6. None

AIR FILTRATION SYSTEM Wet foam in air box
LUBRICATION ..... Pre-mix
RECOMMENDED OIL AND RATIO OF MIX ..... Bel-Ray MC-1 at 40:1
FUEL TANK CAPACITY ..... 8.1 litre
OIL TANK CAPACITY (IF ANY) ..... None
RECOMMENDED GASOLINE (FACTORY) Premium
FRAME (TYPE) .. Single down tube, split cradle
WHEELBASE ..... 56.7 in.
STEERING HEAD ANGLE ..... 45 degrees
TRAIL ..... 5.0 in.
GROUND CLEARANCE ..... 10.4 in.
SEAT HEIGHT ..... 35 in.
FRONT SUSPENSION ..... Internal spring, telescopic fork with fwd. mount axle, 8.73 in. travel
REAR SUSPENSION ..... Swingarm with cantilevered Kayaba gas shocks, 8.43 in. travel
WHEELS:
- FRONT .... 21 in. shoulderless aluminum rim
- REAR .... 18 in. shoulderless aluminum rim

TIRES:
- FRONT ..... 3.00x21 4 ply
- REAR ..... 4.60x18 4 ply

BRAKES/HUBS:
- Front .... Straight hub, internal expanding
- REAR .. Semi-conical hub, internal expanding

FUEL TANK MATERIAL ..... Aluminum
FENDER MATERIAL ..... Good plastic
WEIGHT (ACTUAL) ..... 215 lbs.
EXHAUST SYSTEM .... Up-swept cross-through pipe with clamp on silencer
STARTER (KICK, ELECTRIC, LOCATION) ..... Right side kick
PRIMARY START ..... Yes
GUARANTEE ..... Manufacturer defects only
INTENDED PURPOSE OF BIKE (FROM MANUFACTURER) ..... Motocross
COUNTRY OF MANUFACTURER ..... Japan



the Suzuki having a decent edge down low. But the very light flywheels in the Honda allow the engine to wing up to high revs too quickly. Suzuki has very wisely decided to go to heavier wheels, making the bike much easier to ride than the Honda.

Even though we never really got the Honda to blubber, the Suzuki would pull crisper if caught in a "gear-too-high" situation. The case mounted reeds, combined with the very mild intake porting no doubt contribute to this. We've ridden 250 Elsinores with reed valve set-ups installed, and they perform much like the stock 250 Suzuki.

Just sitting on the two machines gives the rider vastly different feelings. The Suzuki gives the rider the feeling of sitting very high in the air, while the rider perched on a Honda feels like he's sitting down in it. Of the two positions, we prefer the one on the Suzuki under most riding conditions. The Honda is fractionally easier to move around on, because it is a bit narrower in the mid section. Suzuki has two curving side panels covering the shocks that let the rear quarter section of the RM bulge out a shade. You are never aware of it when riding, though, and can only receive pressure on the inside of your thighs when hanging far back over the saddle, something that you rarely have to do. We did have a few riders mention that the high pipe on the Honda got their right inside legs toasty; no one got burned from the location of the Suzuki pipe.

The one thing on the Honda that was noticeable, was the transition from sitting to standing. Because of the low saddle (compared to the Suzuki) it took a bit more effort to accomplish this. Not as bad as on a Bultaco, but enough to bear comment.

Both bikes seemed well laid out and all controls were easy to reach and none took an unnatural motion. We thought that the brake pedal on the Honda was especially well designed, while the unit on the Suzuki took a bit of time to get used to. Shifting on both bikes was excellent, but the Honda was easier to click around and the throw of the lever was shorter. Neutral on the Elsinore was also easier to find than on the Suzuki. We've been told that the gearbox has been strengthened on this model of the Honda, eliminating some of the jumping-out-of-third-gear problems they've had in the past after the bike got a number of hours on it.

Several points on the Elsinore frame have been beefed up and gusseted, especially around the critical swingarm pivot area. Breakage in older models was not all that uncommon.

Naturally, as we've come to expect from all Japanese bikes (except Hodaka), the brakes are stunning front and rear on both bikes. Close inspection showed the front hubs on the two bikes to be identical, with only minor differences in paint, backing plate hardware and levers.

The rear hub on the Elsinore seems to be a better designed unit than the Suzuki, and it weighs the same. We measured them and they appear to be close enough to allow interchangeability. Lately, we've had a lot of reports about breakage of rear hubs on the Suzukis. Much of the problems stem from the rims; they are much softer and obviously inferior to the Honda rims.

Most of these hub breaking problems on the Suzukis come from improper care taken when breaking the bike in. Riders let the spokes get loose, then overtighten—and do it unevenly. This puts pressure at odd points on the hub and results in most of those failures you hear about and see. We took good care of our wheels and had no hub problems, however, we must admit that we paid closer attention to the wheels with our bike than we would have liked. Suzuki needs better rims and a metal back-up plate, like the Bultacos have. By the end of a month of hard riding, the rims on our Suzuki were misshapen and ready for replacement, while the rims on the Honda still looked very good.

One point: the springs on the rear brake shoes are very weak and break easily. If one breaks while you're riding, it might jam up the rear wheel and ruin the entire wheel. We'd suggest you replace them with any good spring of the same size. It appears that Suzuki is aware of this problem. We saw a replacement backing plate for the RM 250 and it had different parts numbers than ours and was beefier in certain areas.

Also, the springs were heftier.

While mentioning the rear wheel assembly, keep a close eye on the sprocket bolts, but don't make the too common mistake of over-tightening. Those are tapered bolts and too much muscle will tend to crack the flanges on the hub.

In a straight line drag race, the Suzuki will pull away from the Honda, mostly because the Elsinore flattens out early in the upper rpm range. From corner to corner, the Honda holds its own. Still, the rider will have to shift more racing the Honda than when riding the Suzuki.

Both bikes had no trouble making second gear starts with stock gearing. We don't even see why they bothered to give the RM 250 a low gear. It's so close to second that it's actually hard to tell whether or not the shift has been made. The rest of the gears are nicely spaced. You won't find that awkward spacing in the Honda gearbox; it's perfectly spaced and the feeling of each gear is definite and precise.

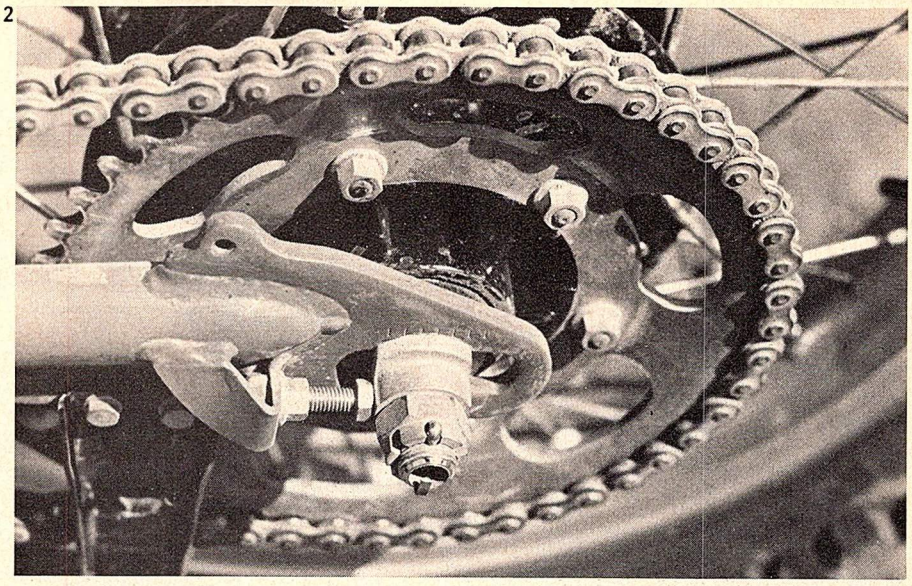
Our Suzuki 250 appears to have about 5 mph over our Honda at the top end with stock gearing. While it's possible to gear both bikes up for events like desert and Grand Prix, the Honda rider will have a harder time negotiating the slower, tighter sections. We've ridden 250 Suzukis with a 15-tooth counter shaft sprocket and the bike can still be trail ridden with no problem.

DETAILS

Pegs on the Honda appear to be a bit too low for comfort. Several times, we brushed our feet on the ground when compressing the suspension. Sooner or later, the Honda rider will curl his foot under a peg. Ouch.

Bits of magnesium bristle on both bikes. Just to shake up the next owner of a 250 Suzuki that you run into, ask him to put his hand on the clutch cover

2



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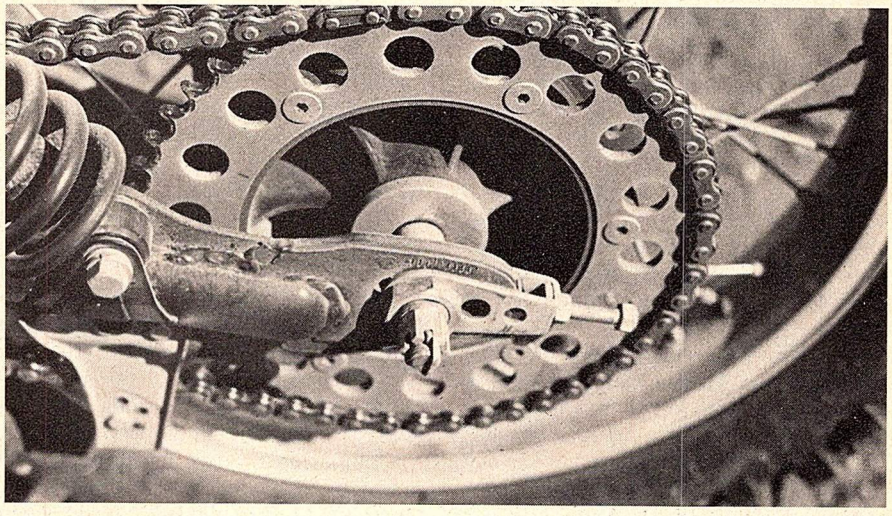

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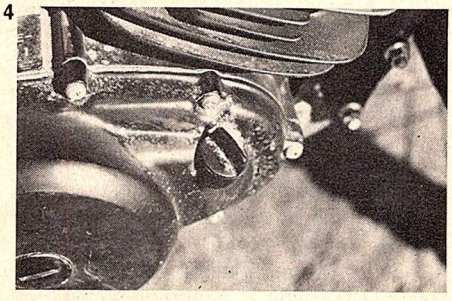

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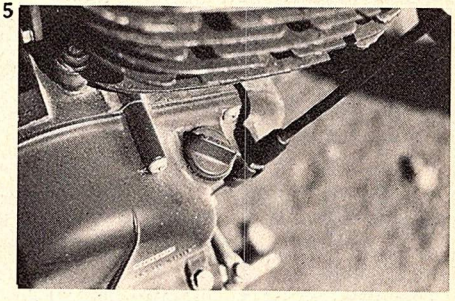

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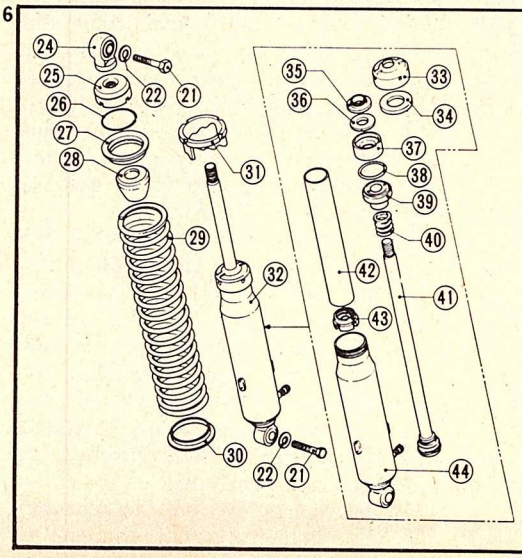


- ㉔ Upper shock mount eye (two)
- ㉕ Upper spring seat (two)
- ㉖ Stopper ring (two)
- ㉗ Upper spring guide (two)
- ㉘ Stopper rubber (two)
- ㉙ Shock absorber spring (two)
- ㉚ Lower spring guide (two)
- ㉛ Spring adjuster (two)
- ㉜ Damper unit (two)
- ㉝ Bump stopper seat (two)
- ㉞ Plate (two)
- ㉟ Dust seal (two)
- ㊱ Seal guide (two)
- ㊲ Oil seal (two)
- ㊳ O-ring (two)
- ㊴ Rod guide (two)
- ㊵ Rebound stop spring
- ㊶ Damper rod (two)
- ㊷ Cylinder (two)
- ㊸ Bottom valve (two)
- ㊹ Damper case (two)

1 Ever wonder how we get those shots? Chris Hotounian crawls under the airborne frames of the test bikes.

2 Honda rear wheel adjuster was conventional; you had to loosen everything just to tighten the chain.

3 Suzuki chain tension could be accomplished by merely loosening the two large internal nuts and resnubbing the adjusters—a real time-saver. No cotter pin removal required. Like the Honda demands.

4 Right side of the Honda primary cover. See anything similar?

5 Rubber fill plug was identical; even had same part number.

6 Here are the only new parts on the Honda gas shocks. Internals are all carryover.

while you squeeze the clutch lever. His eyes will get real big. You can even see the cover move if you look at it from above. Don't drop the bike on the right side.

Better drill a hole in the Honda shift lever, so the lever will break, rather than the shifting shaft. That lever is outrageously strong and transmits shock directly to the gearbox when it's hit hard.

Pegs on both bikes hold the boots well, but the Honda mounting system looks a lot weaker than the Suzuki. It's also a good idea to change those peg bolts on the Honda every few months. They're small and wear quickly.

That Elsinore kickstarter is a son of a bitch to get used to. As you just get into the fat part of the stroke, it flops under and lets you plant your foot into the ground—often painfully. Then the sucker comes back up and slaps you on the calf.

Kickstarter on the Suzy was better designed and well tucked in. It even had a nice rubber bootie over the folding knuckle.

Suzuki has neat guides and roller on the front brake cable for smooth operation, but we've still seen more than one cable get snagged on the edge of the knobby tires. Once that cable is kinked, lever feel is greatly reduced.

The Honda brake cable is shorter and has a better routing system. Both levers have rubber boots over the joints, but the Suzuki boots can easily be slipped forward for adjustments or cleaning. Once you take the Honda boots off, it takes eleven hands and twelve pairs of needle nosed pliers to get everything back in place. But they do work well and keep things tidy.

Starting both bikes is easy, but the Honda is quicker to light off than the Suzuki. And, the Honda carb has a decent choke lever instead of that funky pain in the ass pull pin that the Suzuki does.

Servicing the air filter on the Honda is a bunch easier than on the Suzy. After doing it a while, you get used to working on the Suzuki unit, but speed wise, the Honda has the edge. Both filters are about the same material but neither is that great.

K&N now makes a replacement for both bikes that are far superior and will last a lot longer. Suzuki's air box is better simply because it's so much lighter than the steel Honda unit. Suzuki's is made from light plastic.

Comparing the two ignitions, the Suzuki has to be the best of the two because it's so trouble free. We've heard that a few of the black boxes have failed, but not too many. Suzuki has been running this PEI system for quite a long time now and most of the problems have been sorted out. Still there might be a few failures somewhere. If all of a sudden your RM loses spark, a good place to start looking is in the wiring, or directly at the black box.

Mounting method for the side panels on the two bikes is completely different. Honda uses a rubber band that slips over two brads on the frame. We had one of the bands break and the panel flipped off. Somehow, it got under the rear wheel and got good and scratched up. A couple of zip ties hooked together proved to be good enough to hold the thing in place for the duration.

The RM has two screws that hold their side panels in place. They tend to come loose and should be closely looked after. If they fall out, the side panel will soon follow. On our 250 Suzuki, we put some very thin rubber washers under the screws and never had them come loose again. If you do this, be careful not to overtighten the screw, just good and snug.

Keep a close eye on the rear pipe mount of the RM. Ours snapped off right at the junction of the mount and the pipe. It had to be gusseted. After fixing, it never broke again.

All of the connectors on the Suzuki had to be taped to prevent water from entering the plugs. If corrosion does occur in the connectors, spark might quit, or get weak. These should be inspected after each race.

To adjust the chain on the Suzuki, all you have to do is loosen the two large nuts on the swingarm. They allow the axle to be moved without loosening the axle itself. The anchor arm on the backing plate doesn't have to be loosened either. It floats freely from the hub and swingarm.

Our Honda required you to loosen the axle, and chain adjuster nuts, as well as the anchor arm. Suzuki's set-up is much quicker.

Both of the bikes had the same basic design in the chain guides but the one on the Suzuki had a nicer roller than the Honda. Both were about the same in strength.

Where Suzuki mounts the front number plate, they have two metal plates that rub right against the fork tube; under these you should place a layer of tape to protect the fork tube from damage. The tape will also keep the plate from moving around while riding.

We had a lot of trouble with the lower center motor mount on the Suzuki. It was constantly coming loose and should be checked regularly. On the Honda it was the top rear mount that seemed to come loose before the rest. Main reason for these problems was the quality of the hardware and the length of the bolts. If you replace the bolts with good American bolts and good lock nuts you shouldn't have as much trouble. Keep a close eye on these points, regardless.

SUMMATION

Both machines are fun to ride—no question about that. But where the Honda makes the rider think he's going fast, the Suzuki helps the rider go fast.

In almost all categories, the RM 250 comes out ahead. And, the versatility of the power band allows the Suzuki to be used as a trail bike, play bike, desert racer, motocrosser, GP bike, or whatever.

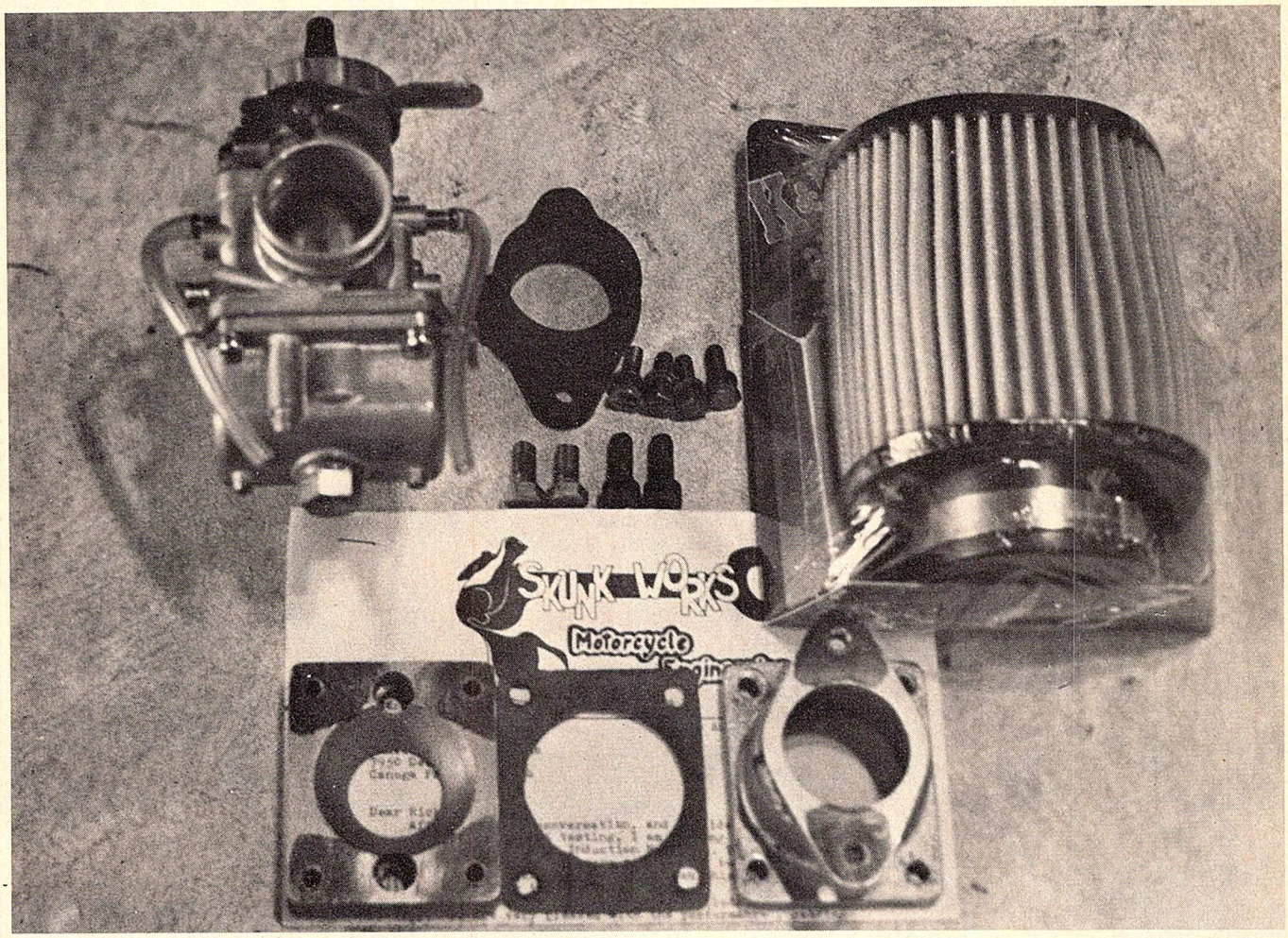
One is new and painted yellow. The other is yesterday's news and is painted red. Well, at least the paint is new. Honda simply must do something with their motocross bikes to stay in the running. Three years ago, they set the world back with a new standard, then promptly went on vacation as far as improvements were concerned. Oh well. I guess if Suzuki could survive four years of the 400 Cyclone, Honda can survive yet another year with the Elsinore. ●

SKUNK WORKS HEAVY BREATHING KIT

A 38mm CARB ON A 125?

You bet. Suddenly, our 125 Suzuki is a road racer.

By Jim Mercier



No one really knows how large you can go on the size of a carb on a fast 125 racer, but we set out to find out. We got this kit from the people at Skunk Works and almost laughed. No way can you run a 38mm carburetor on a 125. But, being the inquisitive guys we are, we had to try the thing out.

According to the designer of the manifold, Ken Macpike, he got a big boost in the low end, plus a bit more speed. Getting both top speed and end out of a simple carb installis almost unheard of. Knowing ll that we would blow his product the water if it didn't work, Ken that we had to try this kit.

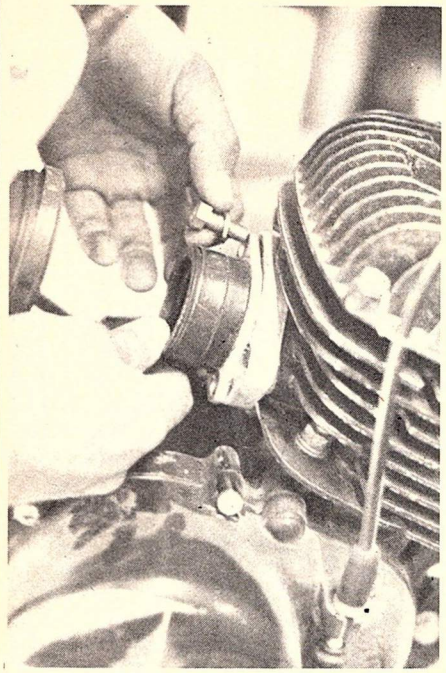
ing the kit is easy except for r problem. The adapter plate to the cylinder is the size of RM intake. Our 125 has an size of most 250 ports and had to be hogged out con- For this, we used a drill motor and a router bit. If you have a stock cylinder and are installing this kit, then you probably won't have to modify the plate, but if the kit cylinder is used, then matching will have to be done. As it stands, the 38mm carb dumps into a 30mm hole. If you run the thing this way, you'll be defeating the entire purpose of the kit. We made our intake a full 38mm in diameter and matched it to the port in the cylinder.

We also had to make a new gasket for the manifold, since the stocker was much too small. All of these problems we encountered was because the kit we received was a prototype. All of these will be worked out in the production units, sez Skunk Works.

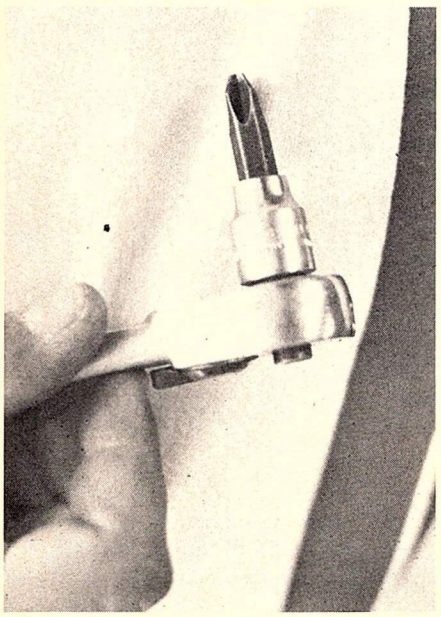
We devised an easy way to match the port to the manifold adapter, simply by using a piece of paper and holding it in place with two bolts as if it were being bolted in place. Rub your greasy fingers over the edges of the port and you'll get a perfect outline of the port. Place it over the plate and scribe a line. This way, the manifold will match the port exactly with minimum hassle.

Since the body of the 38 is so large, you have to remove many of the stock components; like the air box assembly and anything hooking to the carburetor. In order to get the air box out of the frame, you have to remove the side panels, and the rear fender. Loosen the air box and rotate it to one side. By jockeying the thing around, you can remove it without taking off the shocks.

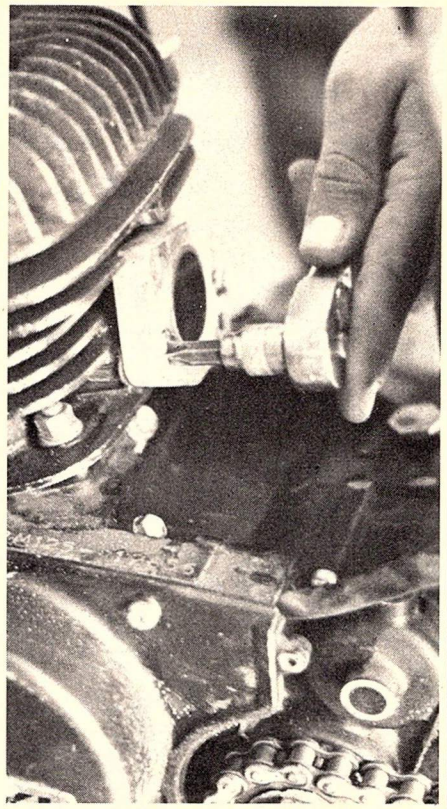
Skunk Works recommends that the black box behind the carb be spaced slightly back so it will clear the top of the carb. We found it better to mount the box over the air filter. Simply make a strap that'll bolt to the box and tape it to the frame. We recommend that



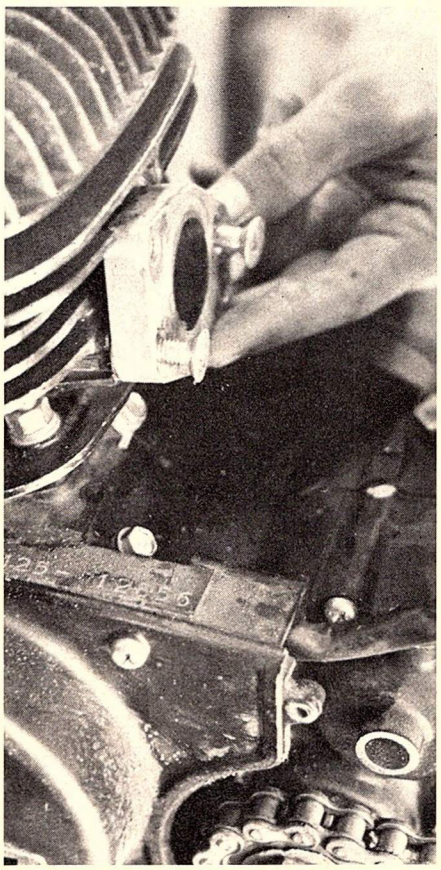
Remove the stock carburetor and rubber manifold. None of this hardware has to be used again, so put it in a safe place.



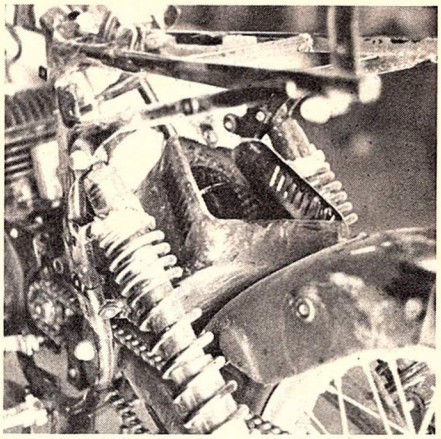
To remove the kit Suzuki manifold, you have to work in a very small place. We found it best to place the tip from the impact driver in a 7mm socket. This way you can get enough leverage to remove the Phillips screws in the manifold.



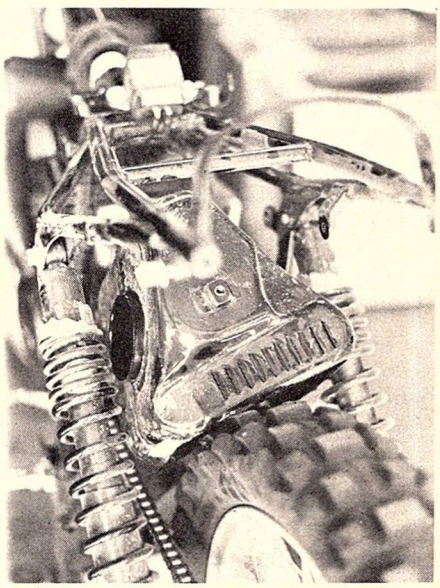
Push in very firmly so the driver doesn't tend to crawl out of the screw.



Remove the flange and try not to wreck the gasket. In some cases it can be reused.

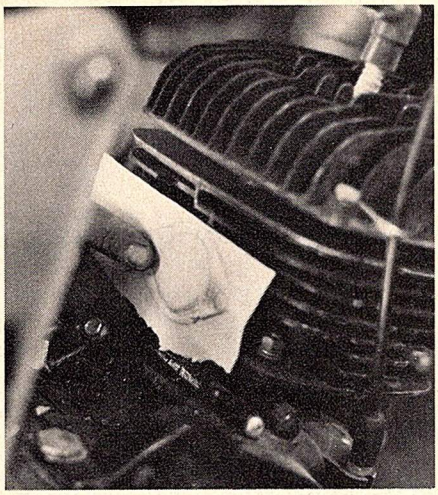


Remove the rear fender and the inner fender. Loosen the air box and let it fall free.

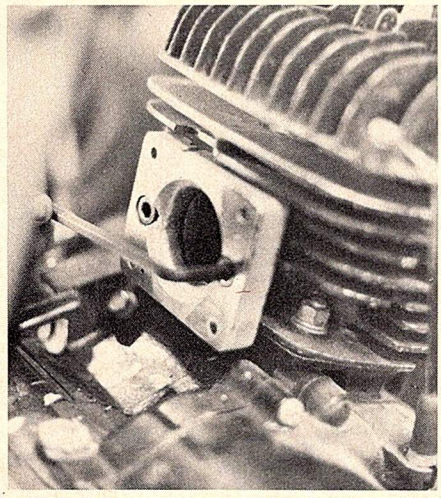


Rotate the air box so it is sitting sideways in the frame.

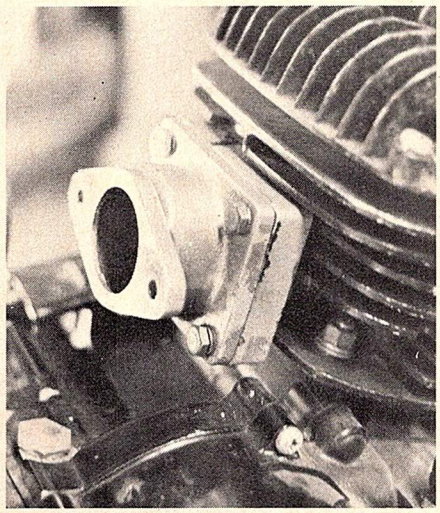
Set the box on top of the wher and rotate the wheel until it co of the frame loop. Set aside.



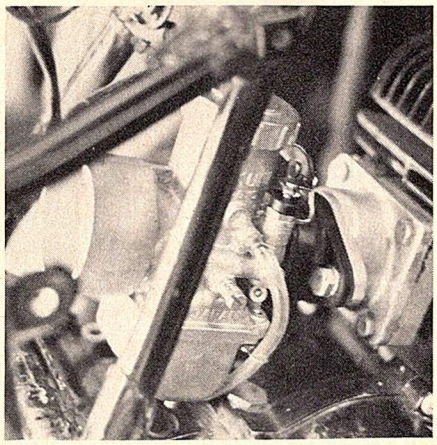
If you have to match the intake to the new manifold, and you probably will, take a piece of paper and rub out the pattern. Place the mounting bolts through their holes to hold the paper in place, then scribe the lines you need. This way the cylinder needn't be removed.



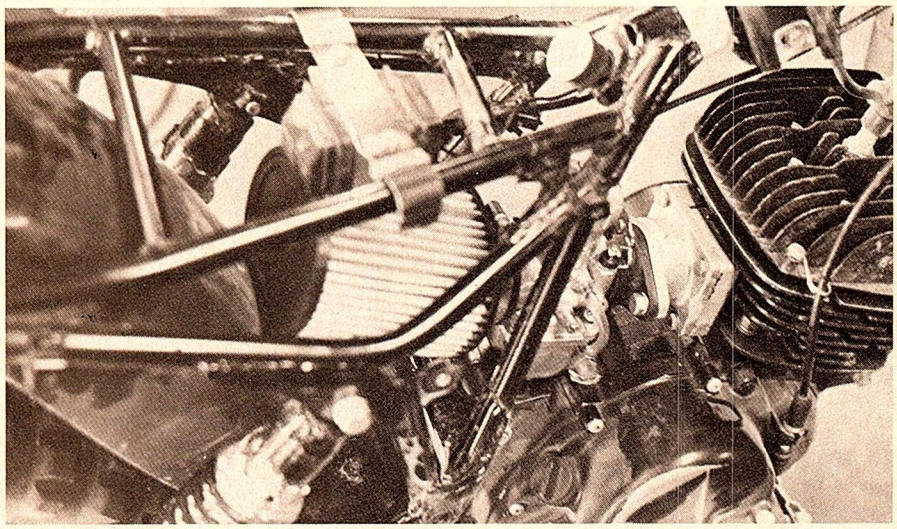
After matching the manifold to the cylinder, bolt in place. The Skunk kit comes with Allen bolts so you don't have to hassle the Phillips screws.



Using the bolts that come in the kit (they're American), bolt the manifold in place. Apply a little bit of gasket cement to the surface so an air leak can be avoided.



Install the rubber adapter to the manifold and slip in the carb. Do not overtighten the rubber manifold, or it might warp. You ought to use a small amount of gasket sealer on this area, also.



Slide on the K&N filter after oiling. We strongly recommend that you tape all around the front of the filter to keep out as much dust and water as possible. No need to tape on the sides, since the side panels cover so well. We mounted the coil up under the seat to keep it far away from the carburetor. It has to be removed each time the filter is cleaned, so it's easiest to tape it in place. Rear inner fender does a good job of keeping junk thrown up by the rear wheel off of the filter. For servicing the K&N filter refer to the instructions in the filter container.

you tape it in place, because it will have to be removed when cleaning the air filter. Use strong duct tape for doing this. If you don't like this idea, then do it the way the kit says. Space the box back with washers; they're provided in the kit for this reason.

Place the manifold on the cylinder and bolt it in place. Use some sort of gasket sealer to insure a good seal. Bolt the rubber adapter onto the manifold and, again, make sure you have a good seal. Slip the 38mm into the rubber manifold and tighten in place. We didn't have to modify the cable on our bike, but be sure the carburetor closes off completely before starting the bike.

Only thing we didn't like was the filter arrangement. They supply a K&N unit to slip over the end of the carb. The only thing that saves the unit is the fact that the side panels and the frame allow it to be taped up to where the filter can be protected. If left alone, the filter is subject to heavy dust bombardment and if there's any water, you've had it. Tape the front of the frame rails so the filter is slightly protected and it'll stay much cleaner, longer. The filter itself is very good and with proper care, should last a long time.

After we installed the complete set-up, we weren't quite sure on how it was going to perform but when we started the thing up, we were astounded by how fast the bike would rev. Sitting in the garage was no way to test the thing, so we headed for the track. In the dirt, the bike is even quicker responding than we could have hoped for. In fact, the bike felt more like a 175, than a 125. It had a bit more torque than before and also hit the power earlier than it did even in stock form. It was capable of pulling from very low revs and still run out very high. It was powerful enough to pull Hunky up the steep hill at our track as fast as a smaller rider on another 125.

We ended up running a 60 pilot jet to get it to respond off the bottom. A 330 main had to be used and a Q-4 needle jet with the needle in the 3rd position. Jetting on a carb this big (on a bike this small!) is very critical and you should spend as much time as needed to get the bike in proper tune.

We were greatly impressed with this kit and like the performance it gave to our bike; in fact it resulted in one of the biggest changes we've done to the 125 RM since we've been playing with it. ●

dnf
OF THE YEAR

MARK KIEL PHOTO

STROKIN' IT

(Continued from page 11)

After securing all of the necessary goodies we would need for the ride we were ready to head for the start.

We looked like official enduro riders as we mingled through the pucker bushes. Not one of the other riders could possibly tell we were out on our first ride. According to the run sheet, the first section was a wide open race; a 32 mph average would be needed to zero the first check. When you zero a check, that means you get there on time. Long time enduro riders like myself know these things. When we arrived at the starting area they were on minute 47. A wave of four riders was leaving every minute, so we just sat and watched. Another wave took off.

I can't say for sure if I was nervous or not, but I felt awfully weird when the guys on minute 58 finally took off. This was it. An enduro! The guy standing at the line told us when there was thirty seconds to go so we started up the bikes and let them get good and warm.

The starter calmly lowered his arm when the time came, he was calm but I dropped the hammer like I was on the starting line of the USGP. Jon and I got the hole shot, that's easy to do when there are only four guys in the hunt. We flew down a long fire road for about three hundred yards and the course did one of those 90-degree turns that you can't make at top speed in fifth. We made our own course about 300 feet wider than the widest track in the sand. After a few yards, we were back in the tire marks and ribbons. Bruce was riding a trials bike and had fallen slightly off the pace. No trials bike can keep up with a regular bike over fast rough ground and we were jamming. Every turn was well marked and the fact that about a hundred riders had already gone by helped us stay on the course. We came to a long straight so I decided to look at the speedo and see how far we had gone. I nearly fell off the back of the bike. That dumb needle was on the zero peg! That's right; it wasn't moving. The odometer read .4 miles.

Now we really had problems. No watch and no speedo. We just kept the same pace and by some stroke of luck we pulled into the first check right on time. I couldn't believe my eyes when the man flipped the card to minute 59. We rolled in exactly on time.

As close as we could figure, they must set the average speed accordng to the average speed you can maintain over each section. The next check was a close one only 1.7 miles to it. When we pulled away from the first check, we hadn't seen another rider on the course. About half way to the second stop, we saw a bunch of riders sitting on top of a ridge. First off, let me tell you about the second section. You were supposed to maintain a 17 mph average for just less than two miles. That sounds easy, but they ran the course over the worst rock pile in the world. If you went slow you had to ride between the bolders, but if you jammed, you could ride on the tops.

I had it wired and figured all of those stopped riders were afraid or something. I flew into the section wide open in third and maintained it for the entire section. It was like riding up the seats at the Coliseum, but I was really getting into it by the mid-point. From then on, I had it wired. This entire section was run on the side of a hill, and it was off-camber. About every hundred yards, you'd drop into a small ravine, but with speed, come flying out of the other side, do a few DeCosters and land right back in the rocks. No sweat.

Only thing that went wrong was Jon's carb top fell off the Husky. He was stuck at full throttle the entire last half of the section. And, of course, I had all of the tools and when the top fell off, he was behind me, so I didn't know it happened until later. All

(Continued on page 68)

NEW! STRONGER!
WISECO'S FMX. FORGED FOR RACING.
Designed to provide the best possible path for combustion chamber heat transfer to the cylinder walls.
Top "L" Super-Strength ductile iron moly-faced ring is strong and lightweight, to overcome the tendency of flutter at high rpms. It's thin in cross-section for excellent gas pressure loading and outstanding seal.
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Lower, moly-faced ductile iron, low tension SuperStrength ring provides an excellent seal, and reacts quickly to combustion pressure to reduce blow-by and to increase power.
Forged from high silicone alloy for minimum expansion, greater piston skirt control and maximum power.
Quality forged from extruded bar stock to provide dense grain flow without adding weight. The "FMX" is the strongest, lightest piston available.
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THE YELLOW-JACKET EXPRESS

BLACKBERRY SUNDAY

You meet the strangest people on a Pro-Fab Yamaha.

Right now, I am being propelled at near-escape velocity down this shale precipice on the back of my very trick and very expensive Profab Yamaha. The trail is loose and the blackberries on either side are very thorny. The rocks imbedded in the shale are very hard. From its Betor forks to its Vesco tank to its Poppy shocks, the bike is cubic-buck trick. I don't want to damage it. The Magura, which controls the front brake, is alternately locking and sliding and releasing the front wheel. My rear brake is applied only enough to keep the rear wheel in its rightful place—behind the front. The speed which I must maintain to remain upright is causing soft "Oh shit" noises to escape my lips.

Far down at the bottom of this hill is a little toy man; an old little man standing by an old little toy Volkswagen. He has apparently driven this tiny vehicle as far up the mountain trail as it will go. It's kind of sideways, like he took it as far up in the blackberries as he could get it and still be able to back it out later. He's facing me and gesticulating very animatedly with what appears to be a fully-loaded, quart, teflon-lined saucepan of blackberries. I'm getting, well, quite close, and as I approach him, I can see his lips forming words which I can only judge to be impugning my honor. However, I can't hear them, so I direct my attention to the business at hand. His Volkswagen is not very trick; he's not very trick; his saucepan is so-so.

It is an eternity later. My very trick, mega-buck, etc., bike is sort of poking its ass up out of the open sun roof of what I judge to be a 1964-65 Volks. The front wheel of the bike, oddly enough, is in the same general proximity as the rear. I'm located a short way (a stone's throw) down the hill. I've broken a good new trail into a formerly impregnable section of blackberries. There are a lot of yellow jackets around. As my mind begins to clear, I am able to discern that the old man is not acting particularly appreciative about the bounty of my new trail. He's speaking in the second person, saying things like, "You sonofabitch . . . goddamn . . . stupid . . . fool . . . maniac . . ." and so on. While he's speaking in the second person, he's also making some very menacing, thrusting motions with his saucepan.

By Ruger Stern

Blackberries are squishing on my chest and shoulders and plopping wetly off my helmet. As I begin to return to a semblance of consciousness, and try to assess the damage to my person, the relaxing hum in the background seems to be modulating to a much more frantic pitch. I quickly determine that the yellow and black floating objects in front of my eyes are not stars but rather symbols of power, potentially far more damaging. So rather than approaching the old man with a complete explanation I determine with razor deduction, that a more immediate approach would perhaps be more meaningful, considering the situation. With a panic-stricken shriek of "Yellow Jackets!!!" and a catlike movement from flat on my back to flat out running, coupled with a kind of hootchie-kootchie hand motion, I escape to the relative safety of the trail. Meanwhile the old man, not nearly so catlike and left somewhat off balance after being used as a stepladder, manages to escape *sans* blackberries. He still clutches a safer, unloaded saucepan with which he beats at the yellow jackets landing on his face.

As he approaches me, I deduce that some of the gauntness of his face is

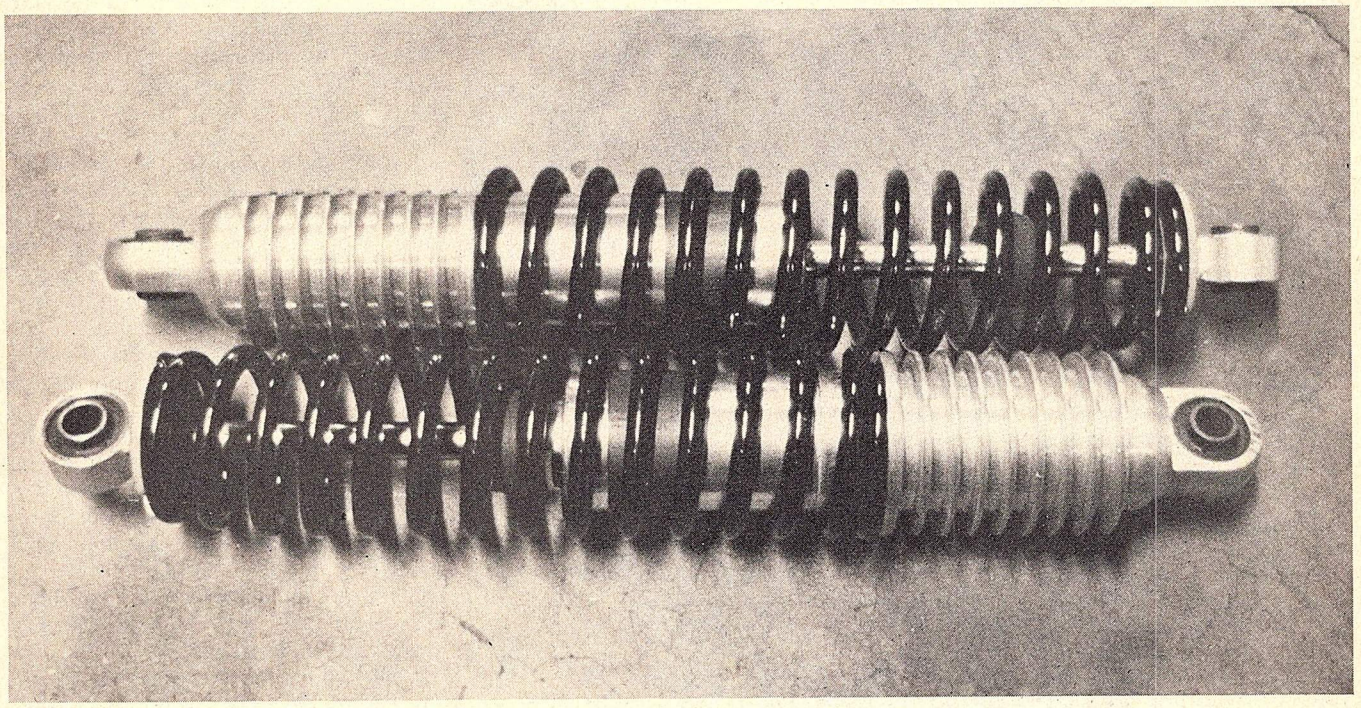
(Continued on page 72)

BETTER LEGS FOR THE ELSINORE

S & W SUSPENSION PACKAGE

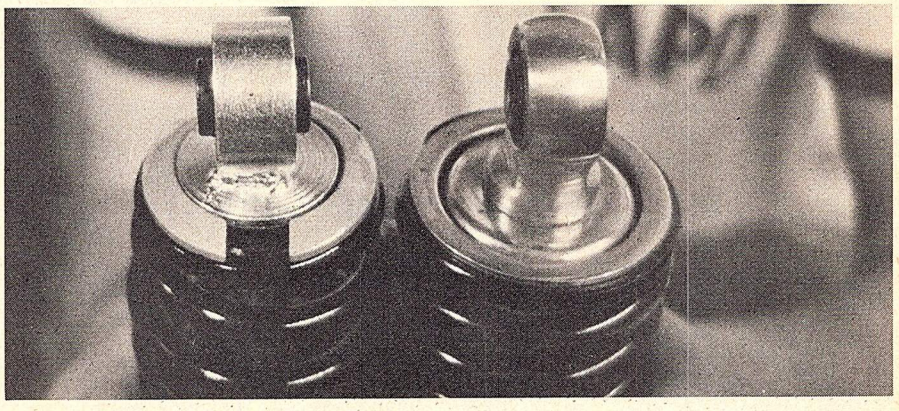
More travel up front and fade-free travel at the rear.

BY the Editors of MODERN CYCLE



Our S&W's were ¼" longer than the stock units. They made the bike turn a bit sharper than stock.

Only other size difference between the stockers and S&W was the width of the bushings.



All things considered, the new Honda CR isn't that bad of a bike. In fact, with a few changes and modifications, it's right in the top five 250 racers. Most of the changes should be done in the suspension systems on the bike. In other words, take the stock shocks off and put them far up on the top shelf of the garage. They aren't worth a fouled plug.

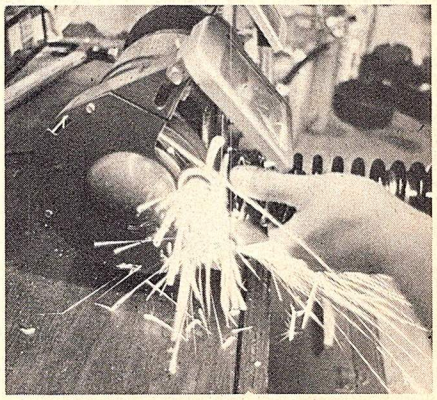
The only difference between these shocks and the ones on the 75 CR 250MI is the outside body and the seal arrangement. All of the damping components are the same as the old Elsie shocks.

The seal on the new shocks is better simply because Honda's old seals wouldn't handle the pressure that the new shocks hold. 180-220 psi is a lot of pressure to have in such a small volume and to put that much air or nitrogen in the shock, you have to have a high pressure bottle like those needed for servicing a monocross Yamaha system. It's quite a hassle, even if you have all of the necessary goodies.

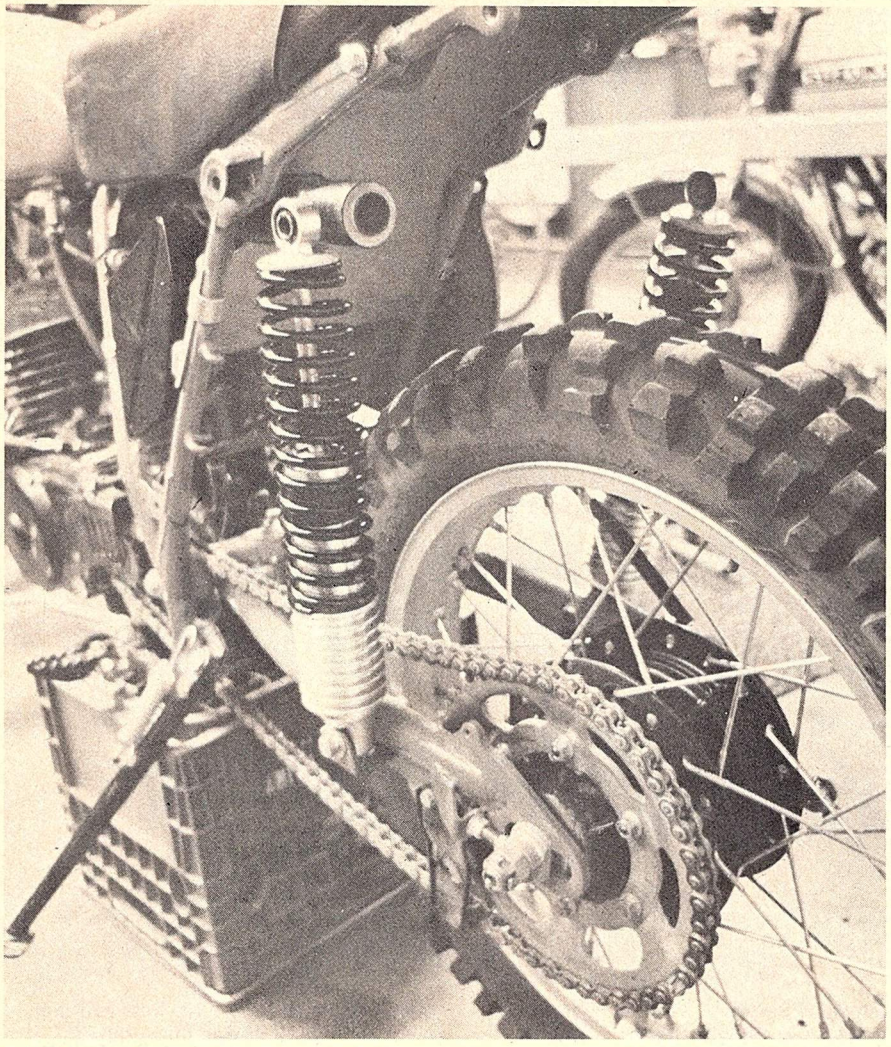
There's an alternative for all of this hassle; simply replace the dampers and be done with it. S&W has been working with the factory Honda racing team for almost three years and have developed a shock good enough to hold up under riders like Pierre Karsmakers, Marty Smith, Richard Eirstadt and Tommy Croft.

The units they sell are exactly the same ones that these riders use and their fork kit gives the same characteristics as the factory models. S&W also makes the spring used by those riders and these, too, are available.

We did both of these modifications to our test Honda. We've installed many fork kits, but this has to be the easiest to date. When replacing the shocks, that's all you have to do. Replace them. You will probably have to play with the spring rate to get the ride you like, but that's no big deal.

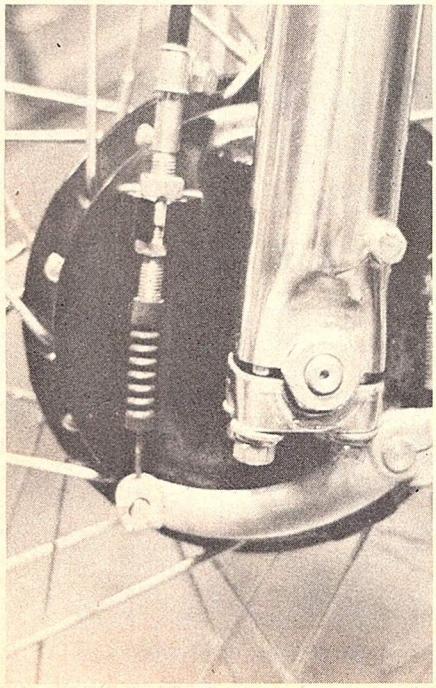


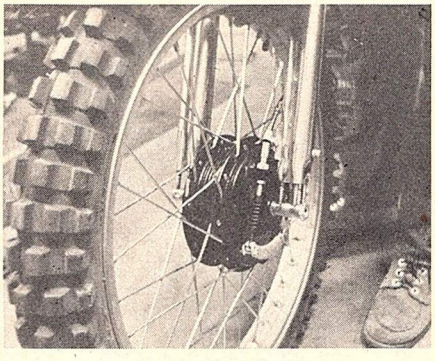
All we did to remedy the width was grind them down a bit.



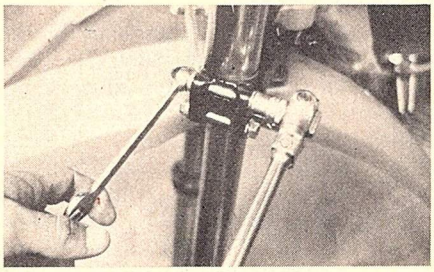
Slip the shock into the mounts and tighten the bolts.

Undo the front brake cable, the guide that holds the cable to fork leg and the plate on the bottom of the slider. Loosen the axle nut so the lower plate will fall free easily.





Remove the lower plates and let the wheel assembly drop free from the slider. Make sure the cable is completely free from the bike. Set the wheel aside.



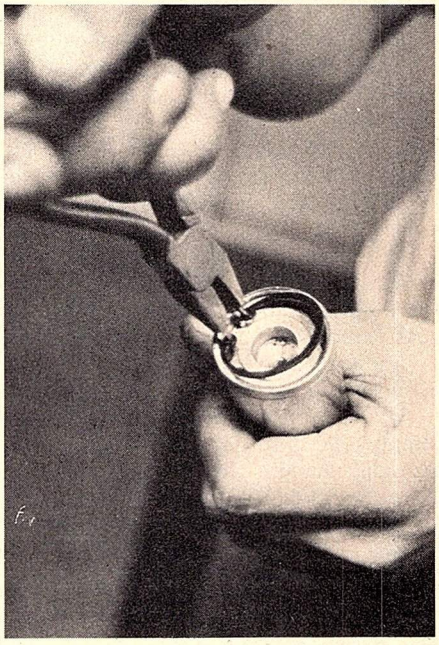
Remove the number plate and the rubber plug in the top of the stanchion and set aside. Loosen the pinch bolts in both the top and bottom triple clamps and slide out the fork tube.

We started with a set of 100 pounders and found the ride to be good.

Shaping the forks is a little more involved than the rear, but there are no surprises here either. Start it off by getting the bike elevated so you can remove the front wheel and forks. Remove the front brake cable and number plate first. Grab a 12mm wrench and loosen the caps over the ends of the front axle. Break loose the axle nut and then remove the caps. The wheel will then fall free from the bike. Just roll it over into the corner; you won't need it for a while.

We found it easier to do one fork at a time and recommend you to do the same. Loosen the two lower pinch bolts and the single top one and the tube should slide easily out of the clamps. Pop off the rubber cap in the top of the tube and remove the circlip. It's easiest to push down on the preload plug with a screwdriver while removing the clip. It comes out of the groove easier. That plug has a big O ring in it and tends to stick in the tube. By placing a rag over the end of the tube and pulling up on the slider, you can easily pop the thing out of its home. Don't push real hard, but apply pressure until it lets loose. If you didn't drain the oil before starting, make sure that you don't blow it all over the garage, or yourself.

Once you have the plug out, pump out any oil that's left in the fork. Place the lower section in a vise; do not



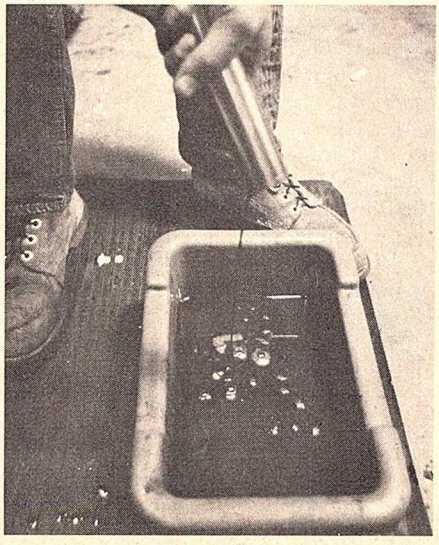
Using a pair of circlip pliers, or the closest thing you have, remove the circlip in the top of the fork tube. Under it you'll find a plug of sorts that holds in the spring. It's not real easy to remove, but by pulling up on the slider, you can knock it loose. You'd better place a rag over the end, or all of the oil will come spilling out with the spring.

over tighten. Using a 6mm allen wrench, loosen the damper rod bolt. Once this bolt is removed the tube will fall out of the slider. Remove the bottoming stop from the slider, as it will not be needed. The damper rod will slide out of the top of the tube. Take the top out spring from the damper, because you'll need it for reassembly.

Flush out the slider and the tube thoroughly and check the new damper rod orifices for obstruction; if blocked, clean out. If your forks are old, there are a few things you should check. Since the inside of the tube is a cylinder, the piston size is critical. If the inside of your fork tubes measure more than .717″, then they should be replaced. A sloppy fit will change the damping of the forks. This is also a good time to check your seals. If shot, replace. Before installing the new damper rods, make sure that the allen bolt threads easily into the rod. If the threads need to be cleaned out, then do so. It'll make reassembly a little easier.

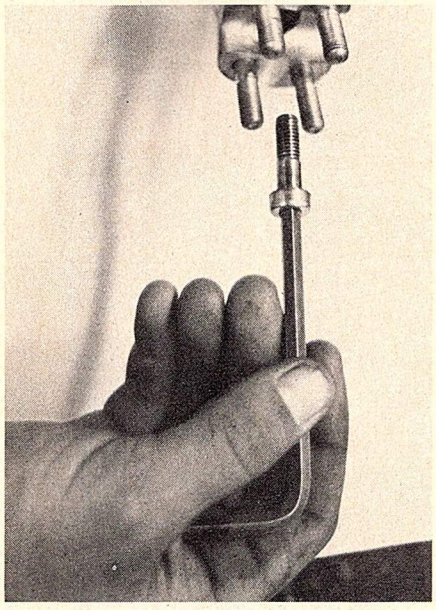
Place the top out spring on the new damper and slip it into the top of the fork tube. Drop the new bottoming stop in the slider. Make sure it sits flat in the bottom of the slider. Lower the fork tube into the slider and push until it bottoms out. Thread the allen bolt into the damper and tighten. If the bolt won't tighten, install a fork spring and compress the fork. This should put enough pressure to keep the damper from spinning.

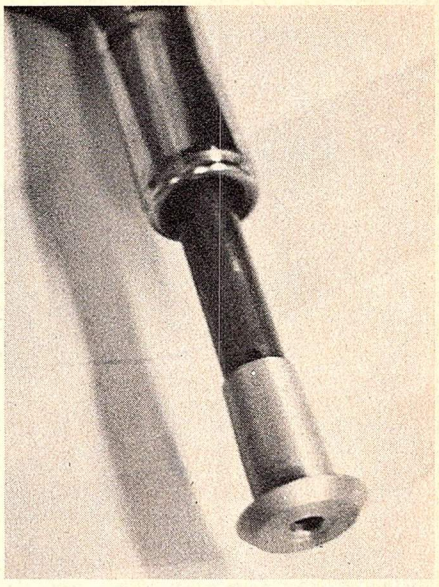
Slowly pull out the spring and . . .



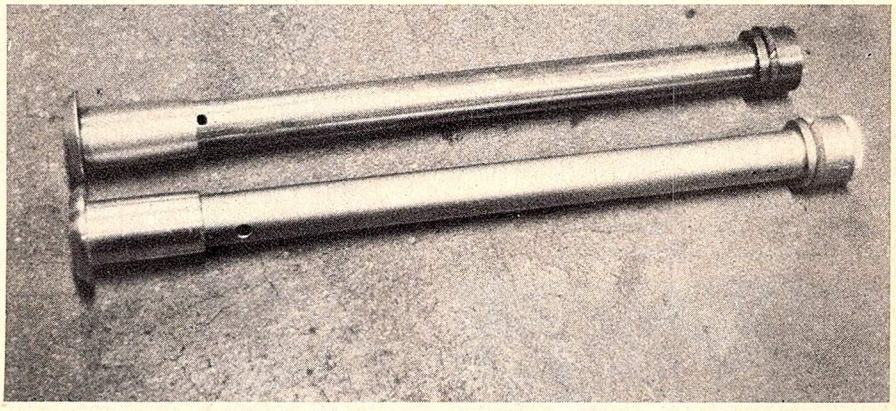
. . . pump out all of the oil.

Using a 6mm Allen wrench, loosen the lower damper bolt. If it turns and doesn't come loose, place the spring back into the fork and apply pressure until it will break loose from the damper.



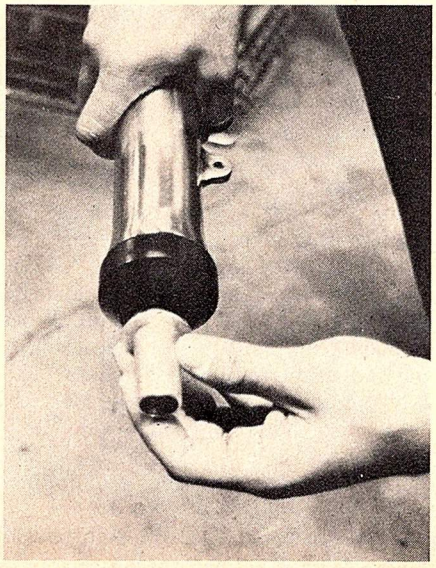


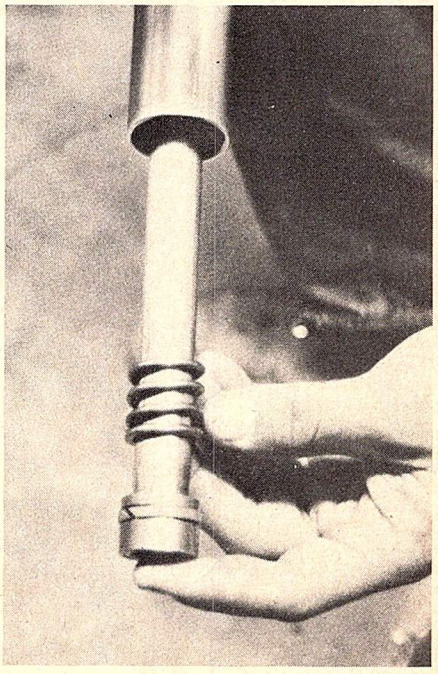
Remove the slider and set aside. Remove the bottom-out-stop and the damper will come out of the top of the stanchion tube. Unless you plan on going back to the stock suspension, there's no reason to keep these parts.



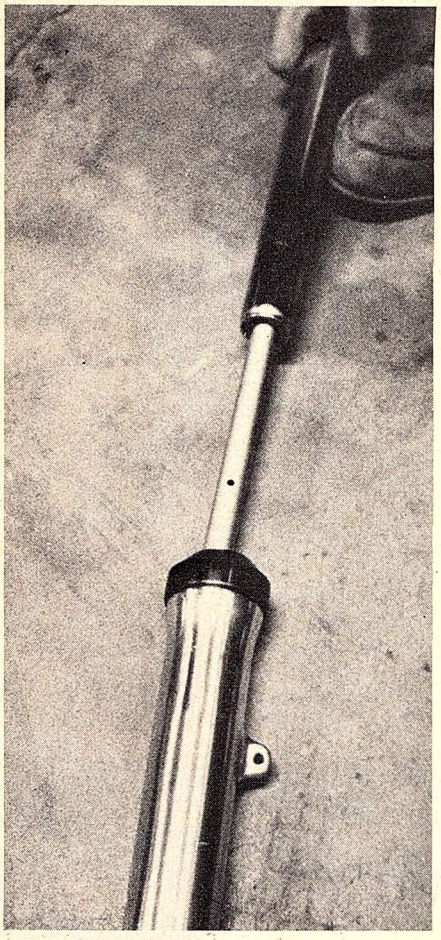
The S&W damper is a ½″ longer than the stocker and it's made a little better, lighter and it works.

Install the new bottom-out-stop in the slider. Make sure it's completely in its seat before installing the fork tube and damper.

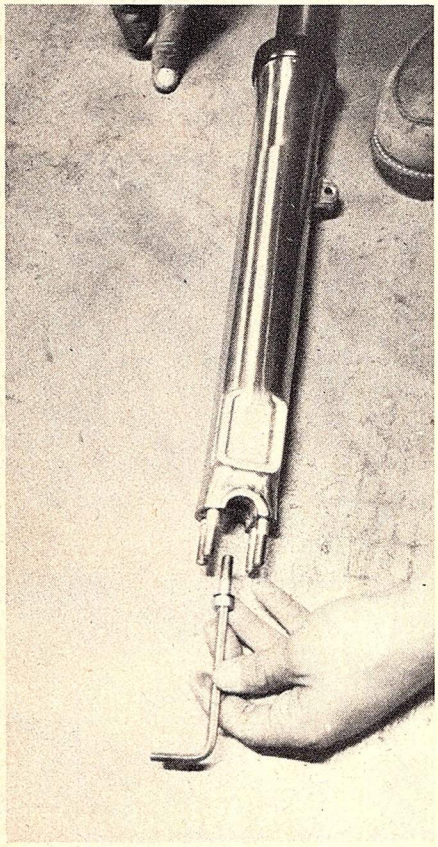




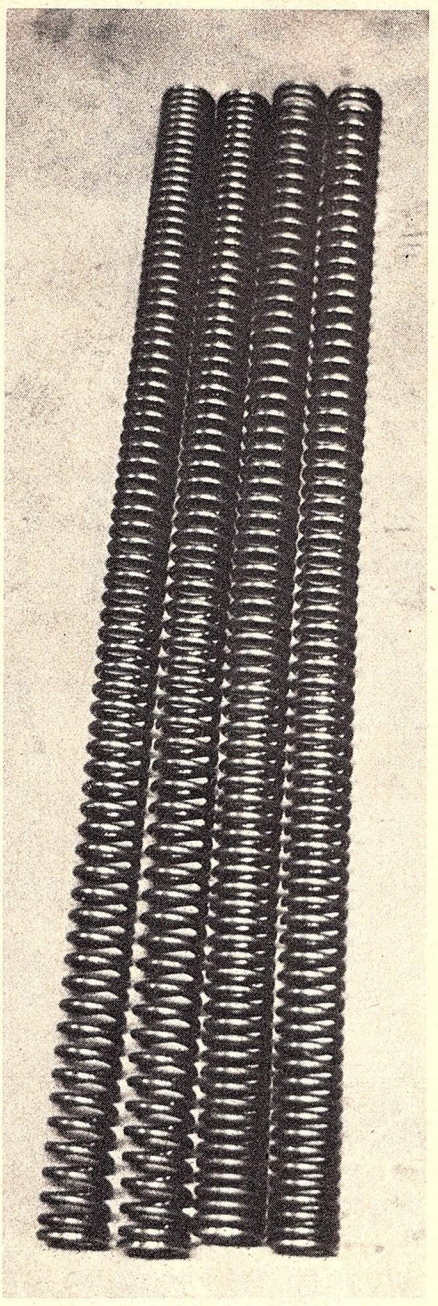
Slip the top-out spring on the S&W damper and slide into the top of the fork tube. Let the damper drop through the tube until it's all the way through.



Lower the damper/stanchion assembly into the slider. Keep lowering it until it bottoms out in the slider.



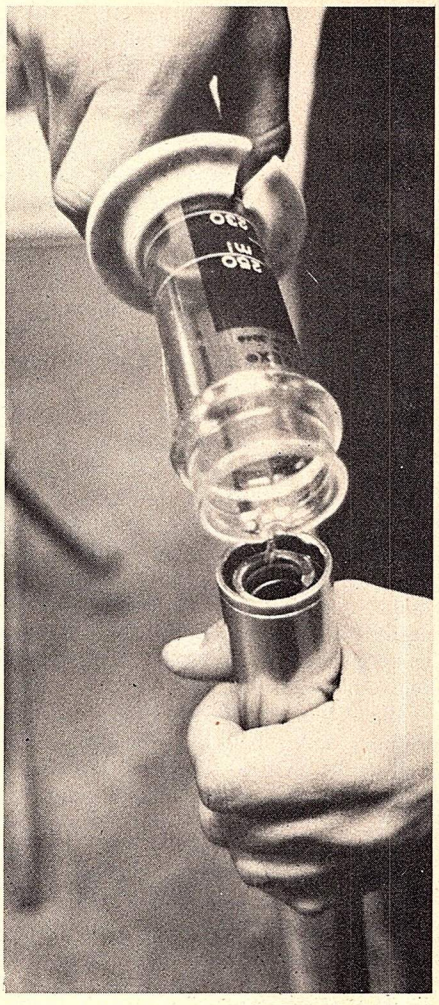
Install the Allen bolt; tighten. If it will not tighten, apply pressure to the slider until it will.



S&W makes two weights of spring for the Elsinore; one is light, the other heavy like the ones used by the factory Honda riders. We ended up using the heavy spring.

All you have left to do is install the spring and the oil and it's ready. S&W recommends that you use 195cc of 10 weight fork oil. If you like stiffer forks, use 20. They recommend never going over 20 weight oil. Install the spring, plug, circlip and rubber cap, slide them back into the clamp. Do the same to the other fork unit and the bike is nearly ready for action. When replacing the front wheel, one thing to pay attention to is tightening the axle nut and the caps. Snug down only the back two bolts on each side, then tighten the axle until it is good and tight. Then tighten the front pinch bolts.

Hook up all of the stuff you took off and you're done. S&W has a lot of development time working on this suspension system and the ride shows it. All of the hop in the rear end was cut and the forks handled jolts much easier. The bike was much easier to ride and gave you a much smoother ride than stock.



195ccs is the recommended amount of oil that you should use. We used 10 wt. Bel-Ray and the forks worked just fine. If you like a stiffer ride, then use 20 wt., but no more. S&W says that no heavier oil should be used.

The biggest improvement comes from the rear dampers. They are the new S&W freon bag shocks. Each shock has a small pouch of freon that eliminates the need for air in the shock. The freon is completely separate from the oil, so frothing can never happen unless the bag breaks. With no air in the shock, the oil will last longer and the damping should remain consistent. All S&W shocks have the three-stage damping system they have been developing for years.

For just over a hundred bucks, you can turn your new Honda into a very competitive bike, and isn't that why you bought it?

To get more information on this kit, drop a line to S&W Engineered products. The spring you'll need is #250H. It worked fine for us, so you should be happy with them. ●

EXTENDED PRODUCT EVALUATION

ONE YEAR LATER . . .

. . . U.S. GP Boots

BY the Editors of MODERN CYCLE

We've received a lot of mail from the readers as of late about our long range product evaluations. They like the information. It's one thing to slip on a pair of gloves, or a pair of leathers and go riding for a day. It's another thing to have an expensive set of whatever fall apart two months after you've laid out your hard earned cash for it.

That's the whole idea behind ONE YEAR LATER. We get something, use it and see if it holds up under extensive usage. And the usage we give a product is likely to be more severe than the average rider might give it. After all, we average twice a week riding, even on slow weeks, and race on the weekends. So, if a set of zoot-capri riding socks looks good one year later, you can figure they'll hold up OK under normal use.

Which brings us to the Grand Prix boots pictured here. They are shown in the miserable state pictured here directly from the Hopetown Grand Prix. A few days after the photos were taken, the boots were hosed off and let dry in the sun. We rubbed some neats-foot oil on them and they are still usable. Oh sure, they're funky looking, but they haven't started coming apart anywhere to speak of.

When we first got the boots to wear, the test riders complained that the GP boots were a bit on the heavy side and a hassle to put on. You see, they not only have the conventional buckles on the outside, but are lace-up types on the inside. While they do take twice as long to put on, they offer a measure of protection that we grew to like.

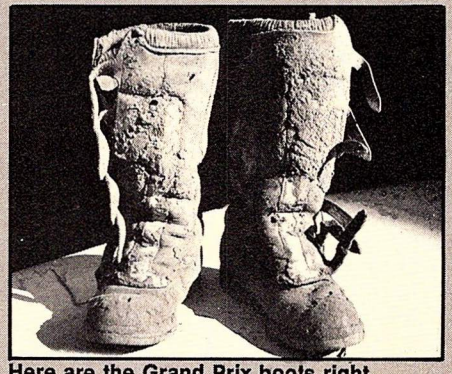
With all of the new long travel suspensions on the test bikes we ride, every once in a while we get our toes dragged back under a foot peg. When this happens and the rider is wearing GP boots, the laces tighten up and limit the amount of abuse the ankle could receive. We've always liked this feature of lace-up boots, but have not worn them because of the lack of padding on the shins and side of the ankles. The U.S. GP boots correct this situation.

A few things on the boots are worth mentioning. When they were new, the metal toe caps went quite far around the side of the boots. Often, we put gouges in the cases of the bikes we happened to be riding. After we took a pair of dikes and shortened the inner edges of the toe guards, they fell off. We expected the soles to start splitting after this, but they held up strongly. In fact, after a full year of use, the right sole of one boot is just starting to split slightly and the left of another pair has a two-inch gap. These could be repaired at your local shoe place easily and cheaply, further extending the life span of the boot.

No break in time to speak of was required with the GP boots, other than the initial stiffness of any new sole, and no sore spots were felt on the ankles of the test riders. Three of our people used them and two of them stayed with them. One rider felt they were a bit too heavy for his tastes, but still uses the boots when he rides desert or enduros, primarily for the extra protection afforded.

We found the boots especially nice to wear if the rider was forced to ride with an injured ankle. Here, the trick was to put on two or more riding socks on the bad ankle and snug up the laces tighter than usual. It gave a great deal of support that a normal buckle-up boot wouldn't and still let the rider have a reasonable amount of foot mobility.

We got the boots soaked more than a few times, but the stitching didn't rot and the straps and buckle assemblies stayed functional.



Here are the Grand Prix boots right after Hopetown, with all the mud still caked in place. As you can see, they're still in reasonable shape after a full year of riding.

All things considered, these are excellent boots and held up strongly for us. When you consider the fact that we average two days per week riding time, it makes their performance even more impressive.

We tested the tall version of the U.S. GP boots, but did not ride with the lighter styles. They're 1¾" shorter and 1½ pounds lighter.

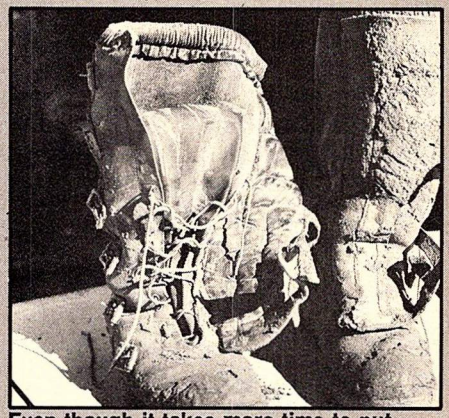
WHERE TO GET IT AND WHAT IT COSTS:

Tall boot: $74.50
Short boot: $67.95

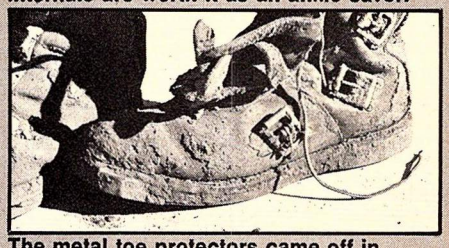
East—
E.S.I.
1011 Cedar Ave.
Croyden, Pa.

Midwest—
KK
431 E. 3rd St.
Dayton, Ohio

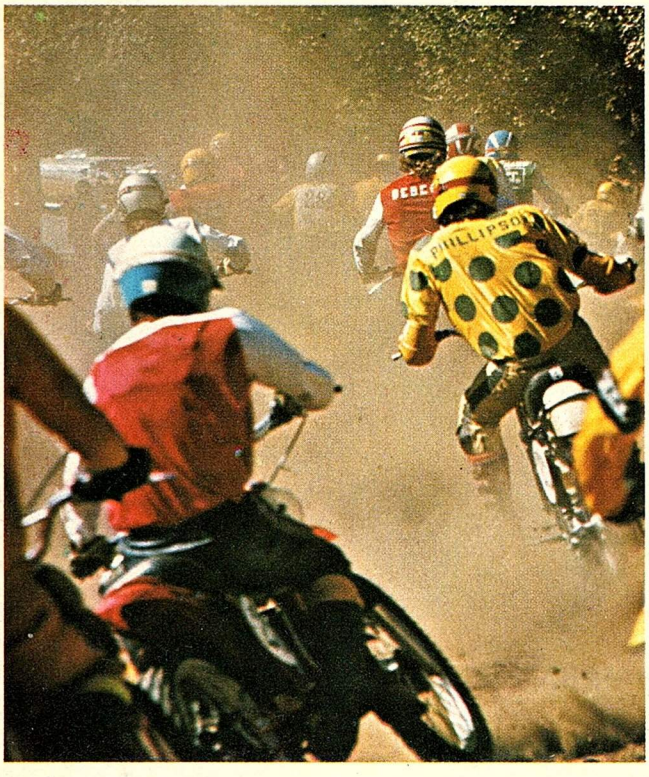
West—
Rocky
1250 Elko Dr.
Sunnyvale, Calif. ●



Even though it takes more time to put the boots on, we feel that the lace up internals are worth it as an ankle saver.



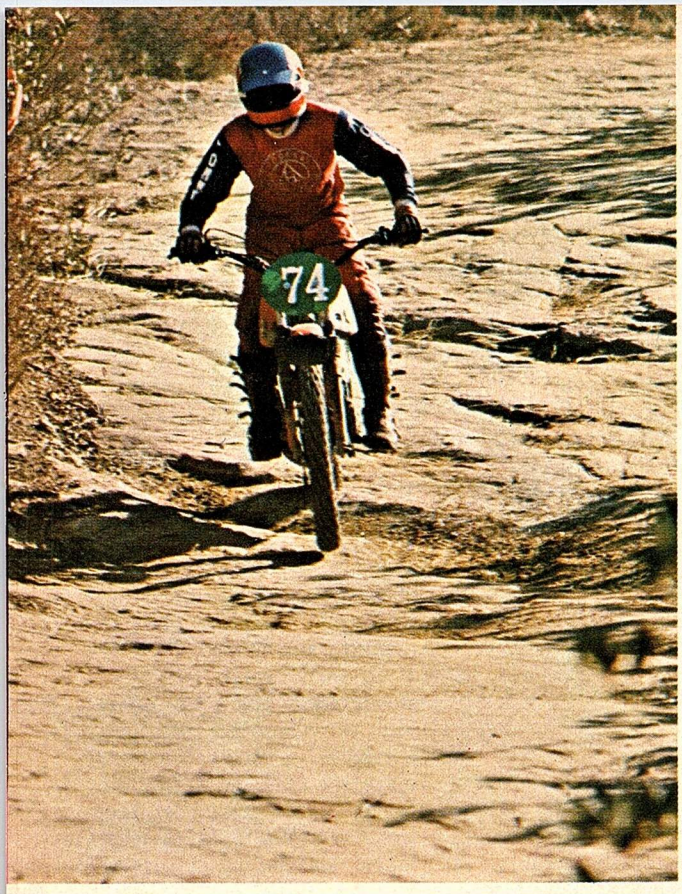
The metal toe protectors came off in about four months, but the soles stayed firmly in place. As you can see, the soles are just starting to split away from the edges on the boot to your left.

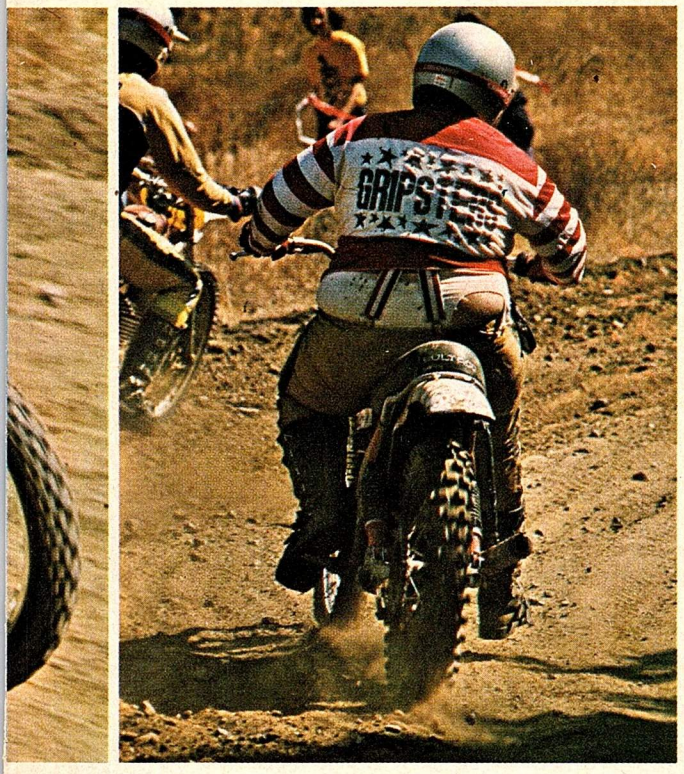


By Rick Sieman

TITANIC PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS . . .

SON OF HOPE





Photos by Sieman, Mercier Heidbrink, Hotounian and Big Jim

With a cast of 2116 riders, 35,000 spectators and Lord knows how much beer and hot dogs.

TOWN

HOPETOWN

It happened again . . . Hopetown. After three years of terminal broadcasting saying "The Last Hopetown," people had resigned themselves to seeing the great classic die.

In fact, the Dirt Diggers themselves had already given up on having Hopetown at their disposal this year and were already laying plans to have their Grand Prix at another location. Then, at the last minute, one of the Diggers contacted the new owners of the old Hopetown site and scored!

Not only did he arrange for another running at the location, but even set up a five-year lease to assure a future. Bizarre! The race is an inch from death at one moment, then one phone call gives it a new five-year breathing period.

Why all this sentimentality for a mere race? It's probably because the Hopetown classic has been around for 17 years. And, in this racing game, 17 years makes it a chunk of history. Just about every racer who ever was on the West Coast, has had some affiliation with Hopetown at one time or another.

It used to be called Corriganville—and is still referred to as that by many of the old timers—then got the name changed to Hopetown when Bob Hope bought the land for one reason or another.

Because of the long and glorious past, the people here have made a special place for Hopetown in their minds. People who never even race any more, drag out the old scoot and send in an entry. It's almost as if they're paying their dues to a two-decade history of racing.

Even those who can't race for one reason or another get out to the track to see—or be seen. It's not all that important that the races be watched closely, either. We saw a few fine folks who merely sat under a large shady tree for the entire weekend drinking beer and listening to the announcer tell who was doing what.

The race becomes a focal point for the year . . . whatever happened was either before or after Hopetown. It becomes a standard time reference with more meaning than most holidays. We overheard a conversation a few months back:

"You going hunting this year?"

"Oh, I dunno. Got some relatives coming out from back east to visit around Thanksgiving."

"Say, when is Thanksgiving anyway?"

"Oh, it's after Hopetown—that's for sure."

"OK. That gives me plenty of time. I think I can make it."

As usual, the place was packed this year— maybe 35,000 over the two-day weekend. And, as usual, a lot of famous riders showed up. Household names: Preston Petty, Little John Hately, Terry Dorsch, Gene Smith, Mike Konle and dozens of others.

While the activities at Hopetown are a curiosity to the rest of the nation, they're followed with a fanatical zeal by most west coast enthusiasts. The only activity that approaches Hopetown on the east coast is, of course, Daytona.

Luck seems to follow Hopetown quite nicely. We can only recall one time in 17 years when it rained—and then it was looked at as a great curiosity. Not too many finished that year. They didn't have the waterproofing savvy or mud riding skills of their Eastern brothers. Ah yes, the mud.

They lined the entire length of the Hopetown mudhole about four deep this year, just to see the antics of the western riders. In particular, the 250 Novice races provided many hearty yucks and belly laughs. Here, the riders

got off in the slimy goop in clusters of ten and twelve. At one time, the mudhole was completely clogged with unfortunates. And the more they churned through the mud, the deeper it got.

One rider on a Bultaco spent almost a half-hour attempting to get out of the mud and left the gallery of spectators hanging on to the fence convulsed in helpless laughter. On the second lap through, he slid out and dropped his Pursang down on the side in the deepest part of the mud hole. After getting the Bul upright, he kicked for ten solid minutes before it came to life. Then the bike blubbered and coughed for another ten minutes until it cleaned out. He swung his leg over the saddle only to have another bike roar by and knock him down again.

Another kicking session followed, then the bike took yet another ten minutes to clean out again. Just as he was swinging his leg over the bike, a passing handlebar caught his clutch arm and pulled his hand off the grip, stalling the bike. The bike and rider then fell over in the mud like the poor little duck on the old Laugh-In program.

Once more, he struggled to his feet and kicked away at the awkwardly mounted kickstarter. Kick, kick, kickety-kick. Bmmmm-bmmm-bm-boooom-boom-bmmmmmm-barrrriiiiingah! The Bultaco cleaned out for the third time. He looked around cautiously for traffic, then climbed wearily on the bike, crunched it in gear and revved it up to about a zillion rpm—and looped out!

As he was struggling to get to his feet, a bike blitzed through the mud and center-punched him. The crowd roared with sympathy; by this time they were cheering for the poor rider to get out of the mudhole alive.

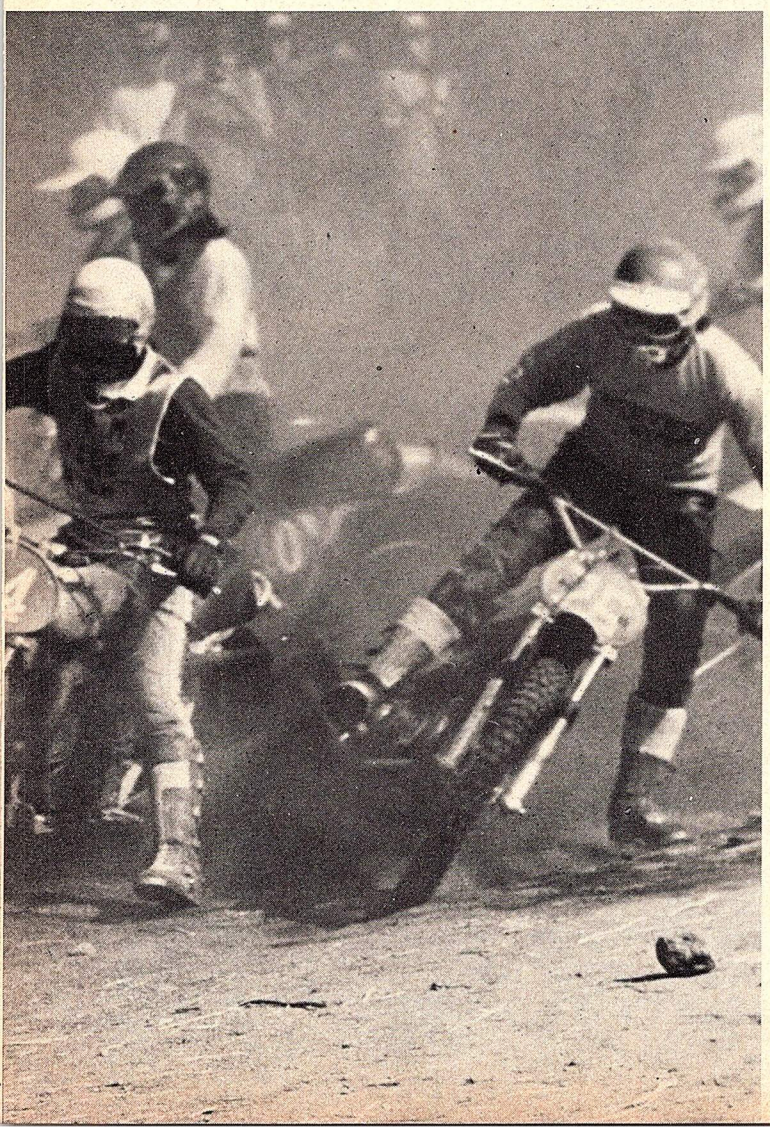
Yet another time, he attempted to extract the Bul from the icky black ooze. The flagmen, seeing his never ending plight, helped him erect. By this time, the rider was panting heavily and sweat was pouring off his chin. You know how hard it is to reach a Bultaco kickstarter on level ground. Do you have any idea how difficult it must be to reach it in knee deep mud?

But, he reached again and gave the bike another fifty kicks. Naturally, the bike was horribly loaded up and it blubbered for a long while before cleaning out. This time, the flagmen helped push the unfortunate as he slipped the clutch and screamed the motor. Eventually, with the scent of a burning clutch hanging in the air, he edged out of the mudhole and got to dry ground —only to have the engine give a pronounced URP!—and seize. A noble effort, nonetheless.

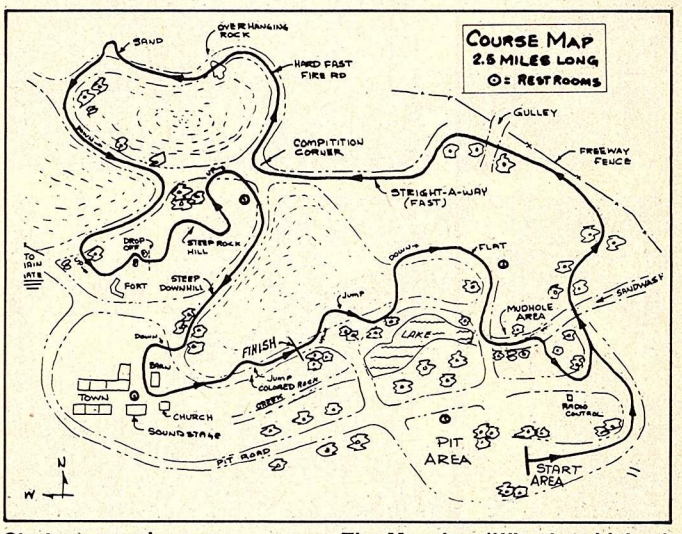
Antics in the mudhole were not confined to the Novice classes. Amateurs and Experts did giant headers over the bars and crashed into each other like a destruction derby. No wonder the fences of the mudhole stayed lined with spectators the whole weekend.

Yes, the race takes the better part of an entire weekend. Ten races are run on Saturday and another ten on Sunday. Allowing almost an hour for each of the races, and you can see that there's barely enough time to run off the races, even if everything runs smoothly.

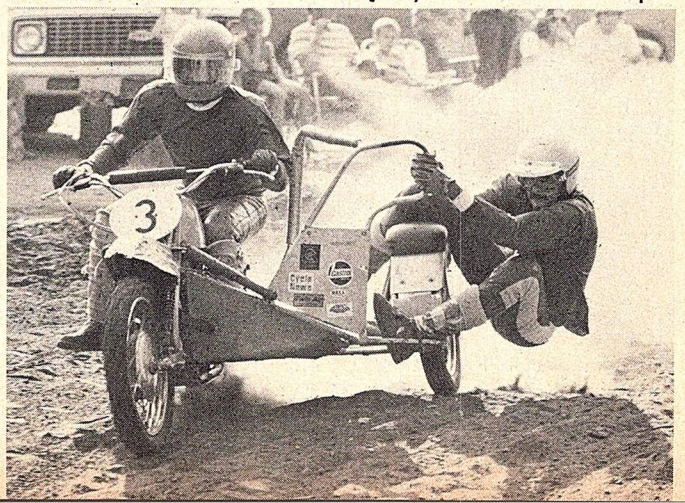
Unlike most other races in the civilized world, your starting position at Hopetown is determined by luck—and getting your entry in early. It becomes almost a science to get a front row starting position. Riders stay up the night before entries open to make sure their entries are in the mail right after the midnight postal pickup. This is because the Diggers take the entries with the earliest postmark first, then

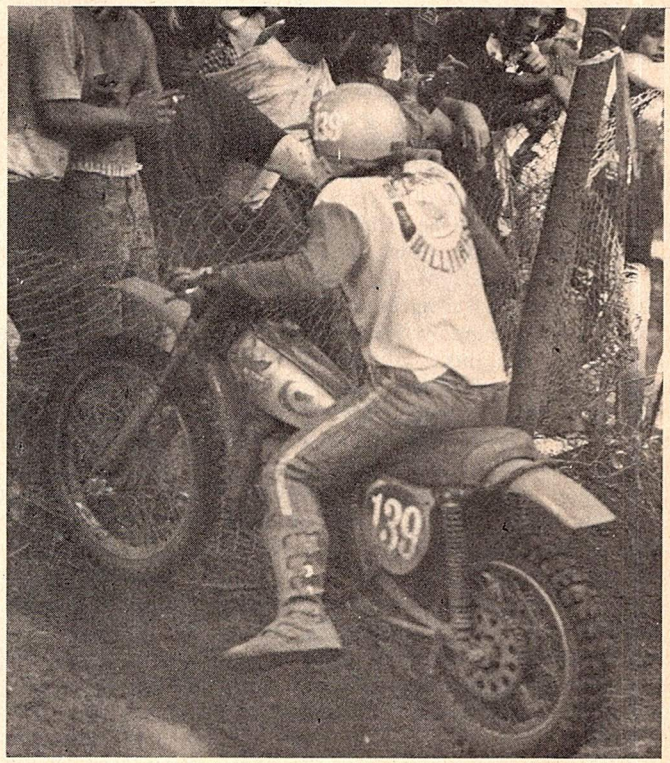


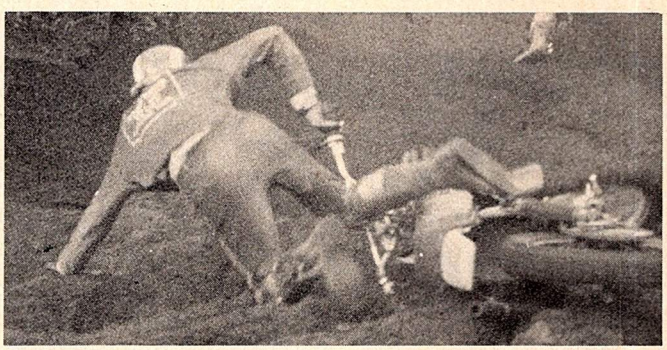
Starts as usual, were hairy and crash-filled —especially in the 250 Novice classes.

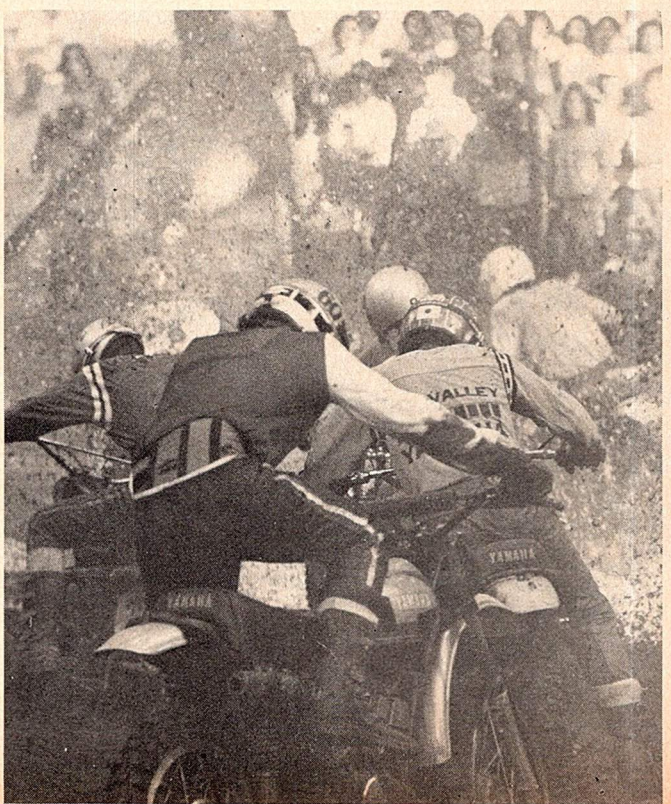


The Monahan/Wheeler sidehack smoked to a lead, but fell back to the charges of the ferocious Ridyard/Sanner Kawasaki Triple.









Folks lined the 150 yard long quagmire the entire weekend, just to see unfortunate riders take headers in the goop.

work on down. When a whole bunch of entries are all marked with the same date, then positions are drawn out of a hat. Why all this hassle to get a good starting number?

Simple. The event is started with a live engine with the bikes in gear. Bikes are lined up twelve across and about eight rows deep. If you're lucky enough to pull a hole shot, you can count on half the battle being behind you. It's not because the course is narrow, or doesn't allow plenty of passing lines; nope. It's because the damn thing gets so dusty.

Sure, the first few races of each day are run on a primo track that's been watered thoroughly, but then the dust starts to rise. And, unfortunately, there's not much that can be done about it. Much of the track is down to bare rock facing covered with a layer of fine silt. And about a third of the total layout is inaccessible to your basic water truck. What can be reached is watered, but only so much time is in each day. Remember, there are twenty long races to be run off that weekend, and too much of a lag will make that schedule impossible to reach no matter how early they start.

Because the course is getting so worn out, the Diggers are going to be forced to change it next year. This is not as easy as it sounds. Two reasons: Hopetown is a "natural" track, laid out around the huge rocks and deep gouges that make up the bowl-like valley. And, secondly, the riders yell like hell when changes are made. "Hey. They changed the course! What gives?"

Even a slight change, like the descent into the canyon and the finish line location drew heavy grumbles from many long time competitors.

The dust was so bad this year, that many of the Experts who didn't get good starts (or good starting positions) simply gave up and pulled off the track after a few blinding laps. The ones who were foolish enough to remove their dust-coated goggles in a vain attempt to see better, were left near blinded in short order. Ken Zahrt and Terry Bilton, two experts who should know better, were seen pouring water over reddened eyeballs in an attempt to wash out the crud.

Unfortunately, the dust also caused more than a few get-offs, some of them serious. There are two very fast straights on the Hopetown track, where riders can reach almost a hundred miles an hour if their bikes will pull it—and these straights seem to be the dustiest and most dangerous places on the track.

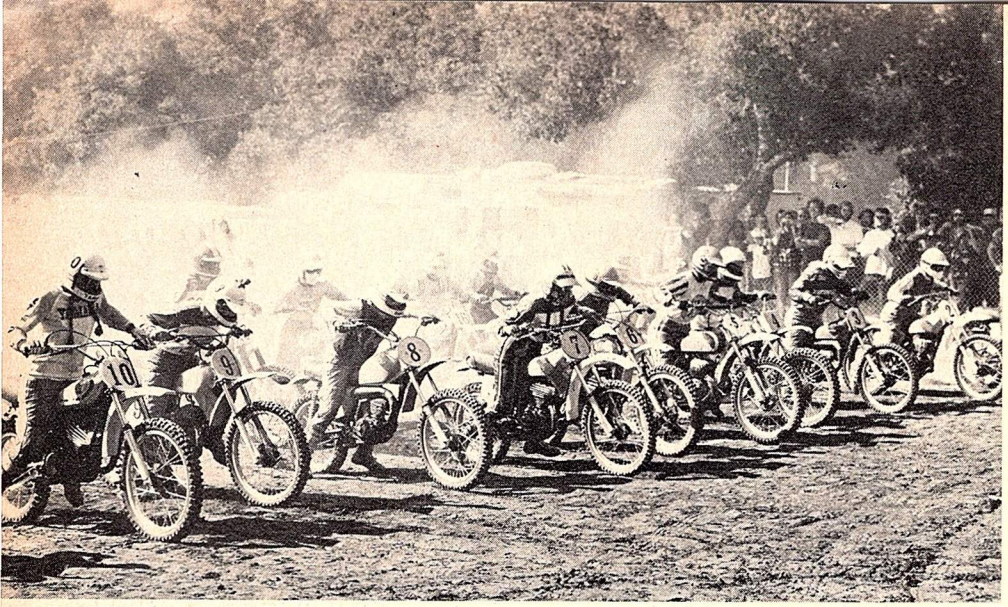
Still, it's a blow-mind sight to see Jimmy Wilson howl down one of those straights on a 650 Triumph tapped out in fourth gear—with stock teeth front and rear.

John R., last of the famous dirty old men, won the Old Timers Class against a field of the fastest beer guts in the West.

Jeff Wright came back from Baja just in time to ride his tired bike in the 250 Expert class.

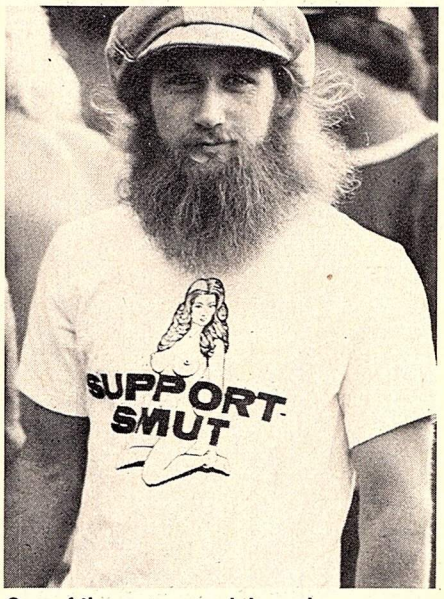
The girls stacked up in the mud with all the grace and precision of a herd of crazed warthogs. Equality through the goo.

Dirt Digger Frolics. As things got loose, the Diggers working the mudhole got looser. At the end of the last day, they tossed Nate Sciacqua into the deepest part of the gorp. The crowd roared when Patrol riders dumped it, which was fairly regular.



Start of the Wimmens' Class. OK. Now get off our backs.

Long time desert rider, Gene Smith, tossed his mighty Triumph around like a two-hundred pound lightweight.



One of the many spectators at Hopetown. We tried to talk him out of his high-zoot T-shirt, but he wouldn't go for it.

Kookie the Wonder Dog is now so famous that he had a stunt dog ride for him at Hopetown.

That's right. Four strokes. The Diggers feature an Open class that allows any bike over 500cc's. You'll find a goodly number of 501 Maicos in this event, but that's looked upon as almost cheating. To be a real heavy party in the event, you should show up on a 650 — or even 750 — four-stroker of questionable vintage (or parentage).

And the weirdness doesn't stop at big bikes. Nosiree, by gawd. They even have hacks, minis, broads and odd sizes. Where else in the nation can you race a 200cc Triumph Tiger Cub and still be competitive?

The course runs about two and a half miles long and is not easy to remember. That's why you find the strangest people in the strangest classes. Can you picture Kenny Zahrt on an XR 75 Honda minibike in the 100cc class? He uses this class to learn the course.

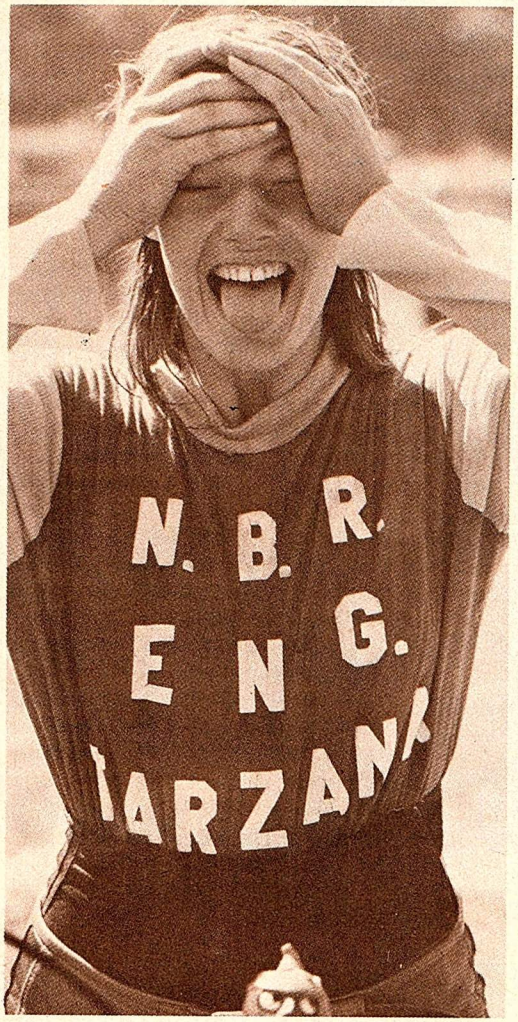
Because the course is so difficult to master, it favors those who can take good lines and those who can learn good lines. More often than not, you'll see most of the good experts running five classes, just so they can get enough time on the track to win the race they really want to win.

Unlike most GPs, Hopetown doesn't favor any type of rider. Here, the motocrosser meets the desert rider meets the Scrambles rider, on even terms. The way the track is laid out, you'd think the Diggers had the District 37 AMA rulebook in hand when they placed the course markers.

Motocrossers will like the course because there are lots of tricky corners and good lines are at a premium. Desert riders will get along just fine because the track is usually dusty and very fast—and most motocrossers fall apart about halfway through the race. Scrambles riders like the starts and the high speed sweepers that abound. And they're the only people comfortable up those hundred miler straights.

The track, all things considered, is an equalizer. And, like most equalizers of any sort, luck plays a big part. If a rider is lucky enough to get a front row start and doesn't screw up, he just might find that he's won a trophy. Not just any trophy; a Dirt Diggers Trophy! What's so special about a DDMC trophy? Easy. They're the best in the business. Either they're enormous, or they're different. Who knows what they'll be? Lamps, with exotic bases, or helmets mounted on plaques. We've seen twelfth place trophies over two feet tall presented to surprised recipients. . . . And five footers awarded to various class winners over the years.

When you look back at the success of a race like Hopetown, you must take a long, hard look at the club that runs the whole deal. The Diggers.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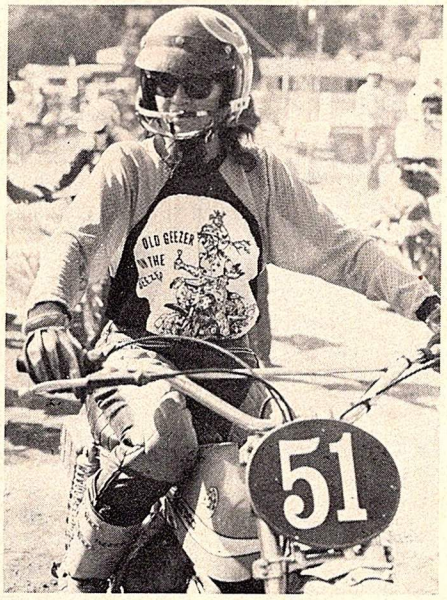
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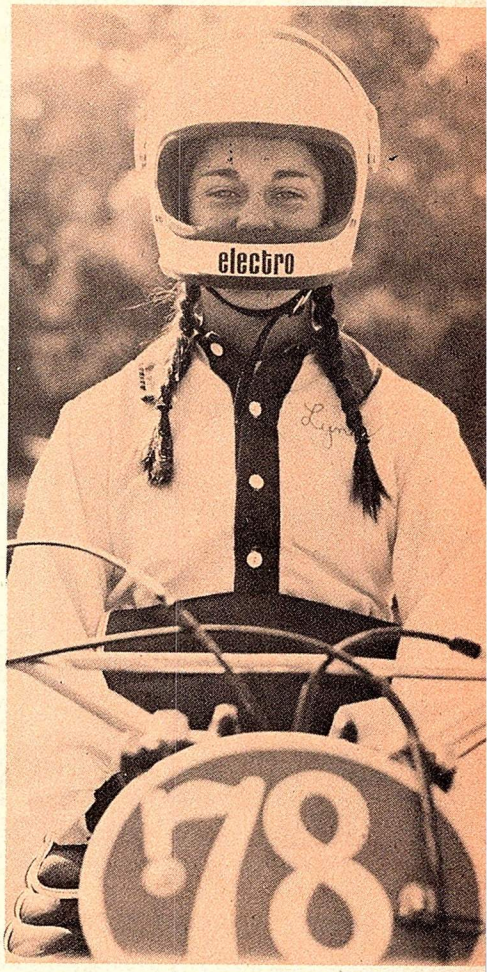
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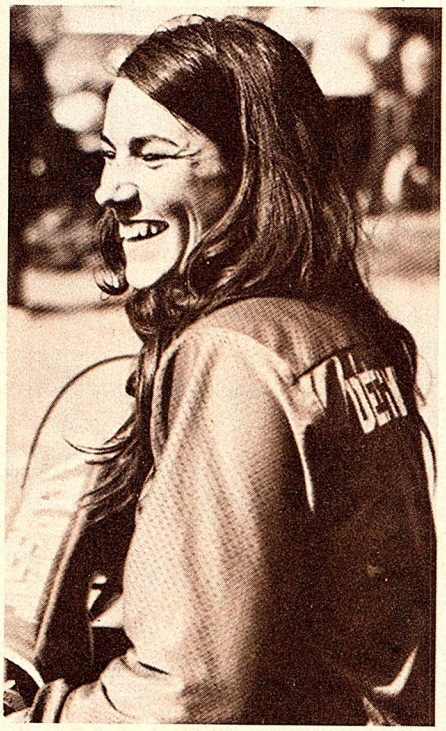

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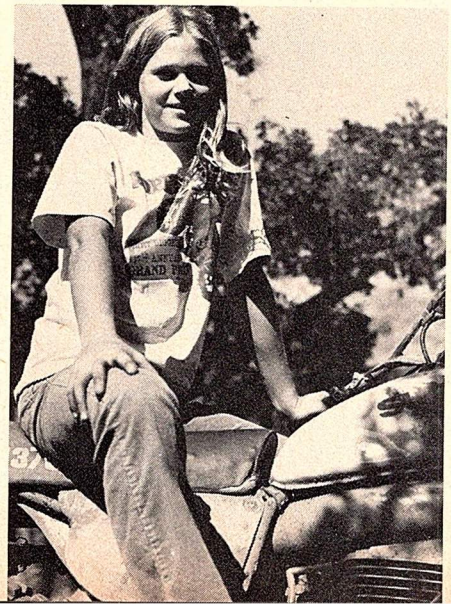

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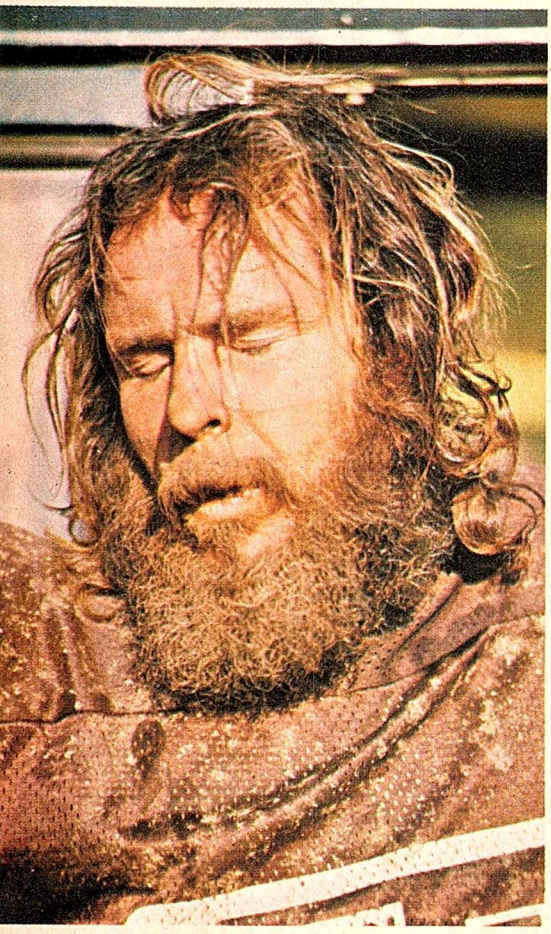
THE HUNK grabbed the lead in his race .



Big Jim rode his best race ever and his face told the story. Hotounian photo.

PROVISIONAL RESULTS

Saturday Races

100 Novice: 1. Jim Holly (Honda); 2. Jon Williams (Honda); 3. John Whelchel (Suzuki).

100 Junior-Expert: 1. Pete Hillebrecht (Honda); 2. Warren Reid (Honda); 3. Marty Miller (Honda).

125 Novice Division I: 1. Scott Spence (Honda); 2. Jerry Little (Yamaha); 3. Chris Hackman (Yamaha).

125 Novice Division II: 1. Darryl Lumbattis (Honda); 2. Denny Waite (Suzuki); 3. Jeff Haase (Honda).

200 All Classes: 1. Jeff Kaplan (Husky); 2. Jim O'Neal (Yamaha); 3. Steve Scott (Bultaco).

250 Novice Division I: 1. Wayne Martin (Husky); 2. Gordon Godel (Bultaco); 3. John Allen (Penton).

250 Novice Division II: Undecided.

250 Junior: 1. Thad Friday (Bultaco); 2. Ron Honaday Jr. (Can-Am); 3. Jeff Drummer (Bultaco).

250 Expert: 1. Will Harper (Maico); 2. Allen Cooke (Bultaco); 3. Jeff Harriott (Suzuki); 4. Cordis Brookes (Bultaco); 5. Larry Roeseler (Husky).

Sunday Races

350 Novice, Jr. Expert: 1. John Franklin (KTM); 2. Tony Rogers (Honda); 3. Eric McKenna (KTM), 4. Mark Rurad (Rokon); 5. Ron Izard (Rokon).

Senior Division: 1. George Walker (Can-Am); 2. Dick Camp (Bultaco); 3. Ed Scott (Rickman).

500 Novice Division I: Undecided.

500 Novice Division II: 1. Bob Mills (Yamaha); 2. Cliff Gentry (Yamaha); 3. Alan Pennington (Bultaco).

500 Junior: 1. Dave Caspary (Maico); 2. Mike Renno (Husky); 3. Jim Dawson (Yamaha).

Women's Division: 1. Sue Fish (Yamaha); 2. Cherry Stocton (Bultaco); 3. Cheryl Acres (Honda).

500 Expert: 1. John Hately (Triumph); 2. Mike Sixberry (Yamaha); 3. Dave Haugh (Maico).

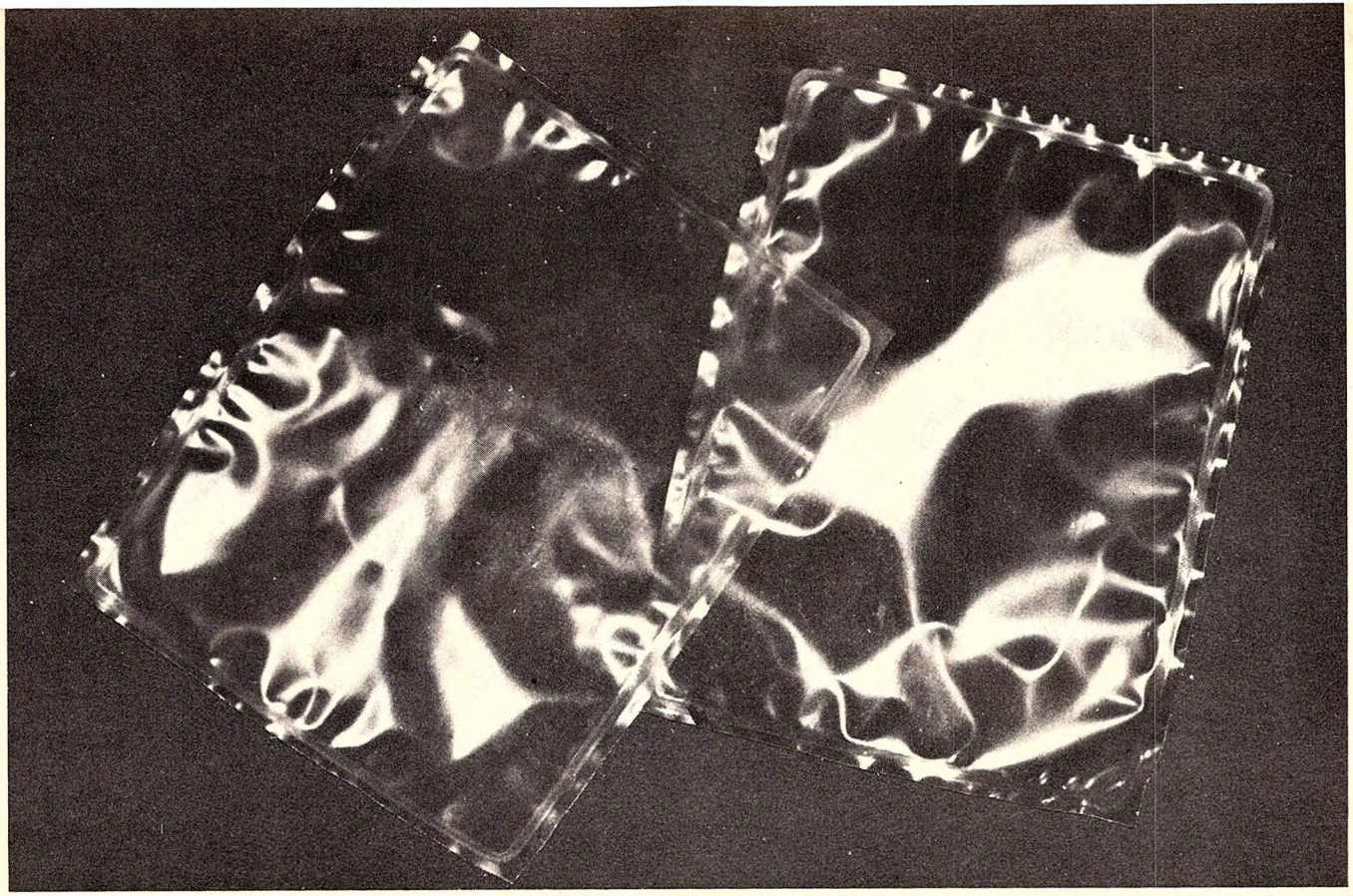
Side Hacks: 1. Tom Ridyard/Charlie Sanner (Kawasaki); 2. John Palfreyman/Joe Gardner (Norton); 3. Norbert Monahan/William Wheeler (WASP).

Open Novice Jr. Expert: 1. Jim Wilbon (Triumph); 2. Gene Smith (Triumph); 3. Frank Brewer (Triumph); 4. Byron Farnsworth (Moto-Villa); 5. Bill Hair (Triumph).

They've been around for a long while —and they mean to be around for a long time to come. So they obey basic rules. Give the riders a lot of riding for their money—and give the crowd spectacular racing.

In many ways, the Dirt Diggers make the promoters of many so called "Money Events" look like pikers. They run a totally professional show. No pit racers. Smooth and easy sign up. Clean crowd control. Flagmen all over the place. Good announcing. Proper and sensible interpretation of the rules. And, most of all, fun. The Diggers in their own way, make the TRANS-AMA people, the SUPERBOWL hustlers, the G.P. Promoters and the thousand-and-one race organizers that abound, look like beginners of the lowest order.

They've been around for a long time —and they've taken advantage of the time to learn what really matters. Hopetown. You bet. ●



$9.95 GAS BAG KIT

Convert your stockers to gassers.

MAKE YOUR OWN GAS SHOCKS

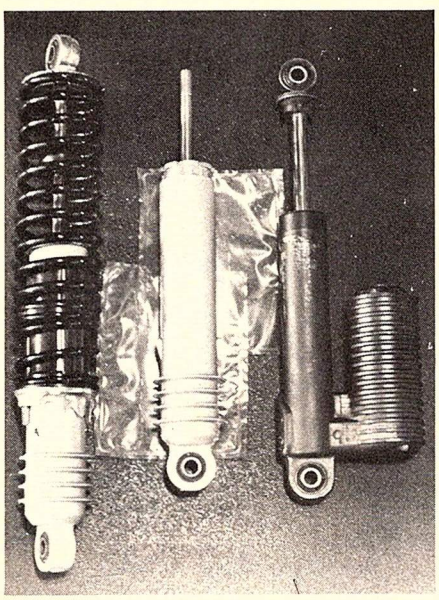
By the Editors of MODERN CYCLE

Gas shocks seem to have become the new hot set-up for curing (at least temporarily) some of the problems of the serious racer. With the trend firmly locked in towards long travel rear ends, the loads on shocks have increased severely. No longer does a "normal" shock cut it. People have taken to aluminum bodies, remote reservoirs, huge finned areas and large fluid volumes, in an attempt to keep the damping of shocks alive.

Some of these approaches have worked better than others, but the one approach that seems to be the most productive, is the gas filled shock. There are two schools of thought on this. Some, like Girling, mix the gas and the oil together. Others, like Bilstein, have a diaphragm separating the oil from the gas. Most shock people are playing around with nitrogen, because it's cheap and safe to work with. Additionally, it doesn't break down the oil as soon as common air, or several other gases that might also work.

The only other variations we've seen —so far—are the Freon cells that the new S & W shocks are using. Freon doesn't get along too well with oil, so they have isolated the gas from the oil by containing it in a cellophane bag.

This approach offers a bunch of benefits that the gas charged accessory shocks don't have: most importantly, the hassle of shock gas leakage is virtually ended. When a set of Girlings or Bilsteins have the gas leak out, that's it. You throw them away. And at well over a hundred bucks per pair, that's a heavy investment down the old poop chute.



Here's what you get for $9.95: the Freon bags, enough special oil and directions.

Which brings us to the new SKY-WAY GAS CHAMBER KIT. They're also incorporating the sealed Freon cell approach, but they're not selling a shock. What they are doing, is making a kit that converts any double body shock into a gas shock—for under ten bucks.

This means you can use the kit in Boges, Honda shocks, Thermal Flows, Konis and any other double-bodied shock. You cannot use the kit in Curnutts, rebuildable Girlings, Works Performance, or any other single-bodied shock. Some shocks come in both styles, like the Red Wings; the double bodied Red Wings can use the kit.

The GAS CHAMBER KIT comes with a special fluid that has very stable, low-viscosity properties. According to the manufacturer, you just can't pop in any old shock fluid, as some of them are not compatible with the bags.

Claims for the kit are simple. Foaming is eliminated and whatever curve the shock has built in it, will be retained faithfully, no matter how hot the shock gets.

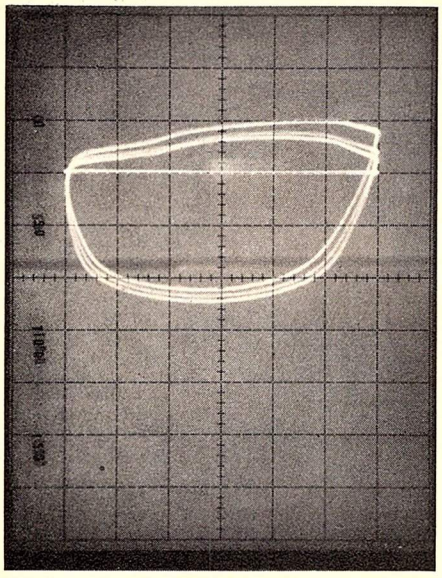
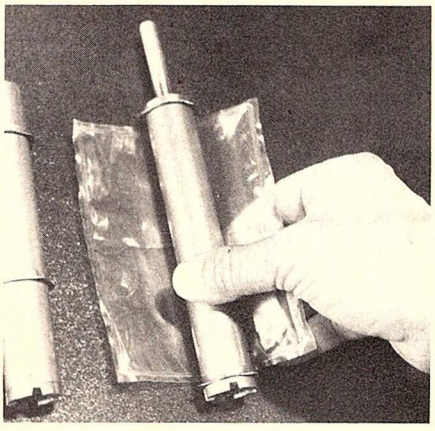


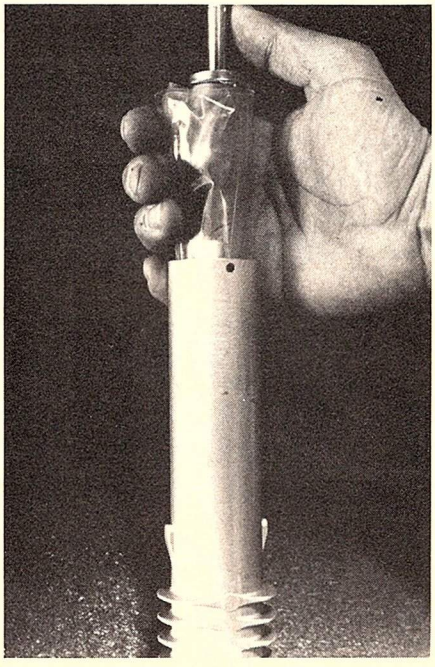
Figure —1
On the shock dyno, the GAS CHAMBER kitted Boge shock held up well and didn't fade appreciably, even at 200 degrees of torture testing.

We built a set of Boges (13.5″ length) with the Freon bags and ran them on a shock dyno to see how they held up. Readings were taken at 100, 150 and 200 degrees F. As you can see by the scope curves (Fig. 1), the shocks held up just fine. A normal Boge, run at 200 degrees, exhibits almost total fade.

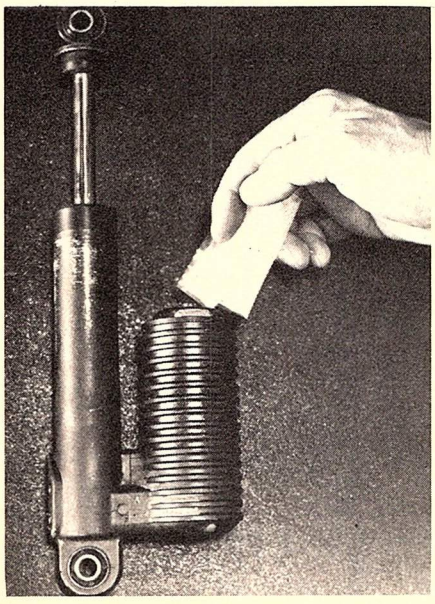
To get the shocks that hot, we stroked them at 150 cycles per second and kept a close eye on the temperature gauge. Additionally, we timed the temperature rise. It took 6 min. 14 secs. to reach 150 degrees (from a forced 100-degree base), then took another 10 minutes even to reach a full 200 degrees. Our shock developed a slight spike at the top part of the compression curve, which was probably a built in trait of the Boge valving.



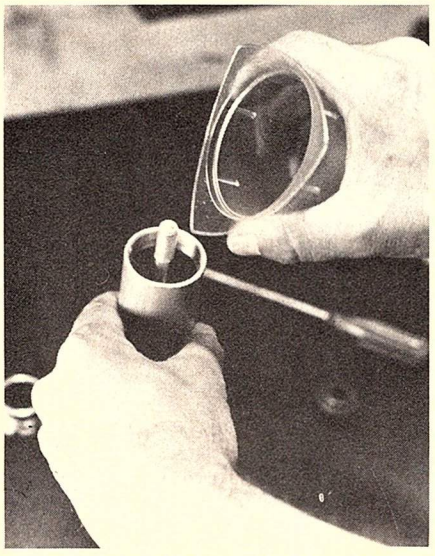
In some shocks with inner/outer bodies, the inner body locators must be moved to the edges to allow clearance for the Freon bags.



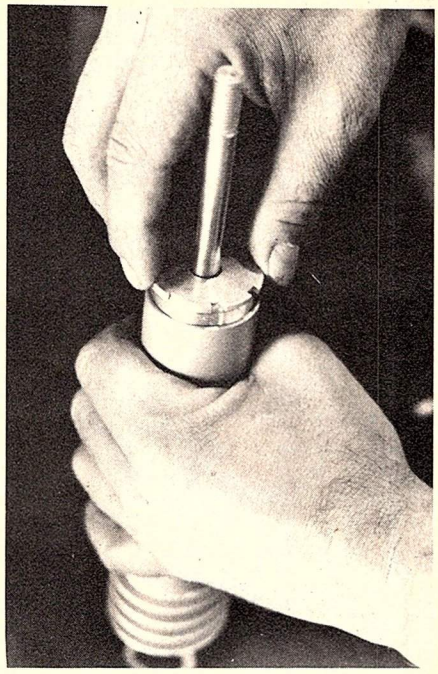
Here, we're putting the GAS CHAMBER bags in a Honda shock.



On shocks with remote reservoirs (like Thermal Flows), the gas bag is merely folded up and inserted in the reservoir.



After installing the bags, the shock is then filled completely up with the special kit fluid. No air bubbles should be left in the body, or the shock will fade and froth.



With the shaft fully extended, screw everything down in place and slip on the spring. If both shocks don't stroke evenly, chances are you have some air present in one. Remove the cap, pour some more oil in and attempt to bleed off any bubbles that might be trapped.

One very important note: While the GAS CHAMBER KIT does indeed keep the shock from foaming and eliminates most of the fade, it will not change the basic damping characteristic of your particular shock. If you like the way your Koni runs—for example—until it gets hot, then the GAS CHAMBER KIT will keep that curve. We did notice a slightly smoother stroke than the stock Boge, but we can probably attribute that to the very low viscosity oil used in the kit.

The manufacturers were very insistent that their oil be used in conjunction with the gas bags, even aside from the compatibility factor. They claim that the breakaway friction is much lower with their oil than a conventional shock fluid. Too heavy of an oil will make the bags respond in a sluggish fashion, SKYWAY told us.

Whatever. The Freon gas bags do work as claimed. It's up to you to adjust your shock to suit your particular riding requirements. Most of the rebuildable shocks are adjustable to a certain extent, so it appears that you can now get the benefits of a gas shock for a fraction of the current going price.

WHERE TO GET IT:

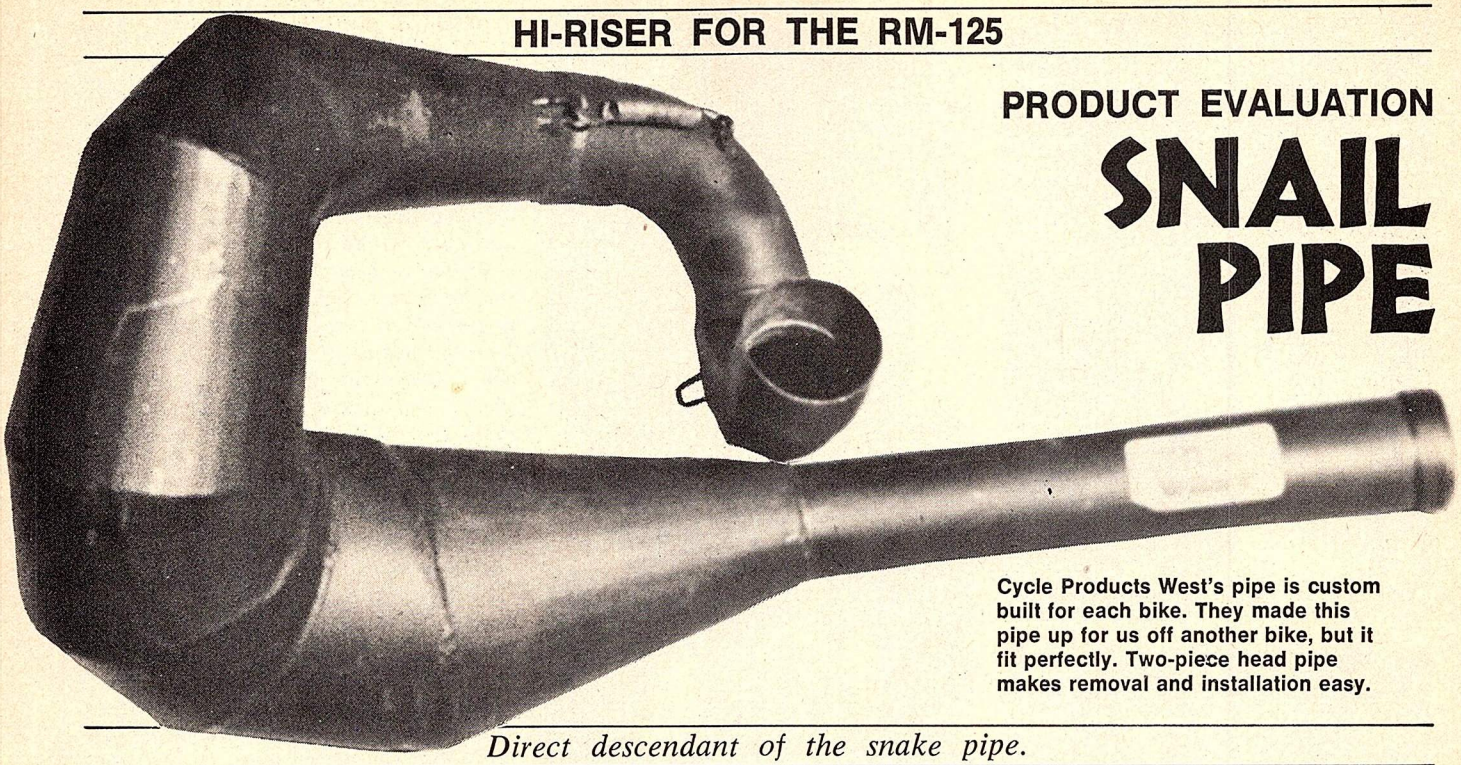
SKYWAY RECREATIONAL PRODUCTS

One of their many distributors is:

CYCLEMASTERS INC.
12306 Gladstone
Sylmar, CA 91342
(213) 361-7915 ●

PRODUCT EVALUATION

SNAIL PIPE



Cycle Products West's pipe is custom built for each bike. They made this pipe up for us off another bike, but it fit perfectly. Two-piece head pipe makes removal and installation easy.

Direct descendant of the snake pipe.

By the Editors of MODERN CYCLE

One of the biggest problems all long travel bikes with down pipes face is the fact that they often bottom out. This makes your pipe look like the surface of the moon. Our biggest hassles have come from the new RM 125 Suzukis.

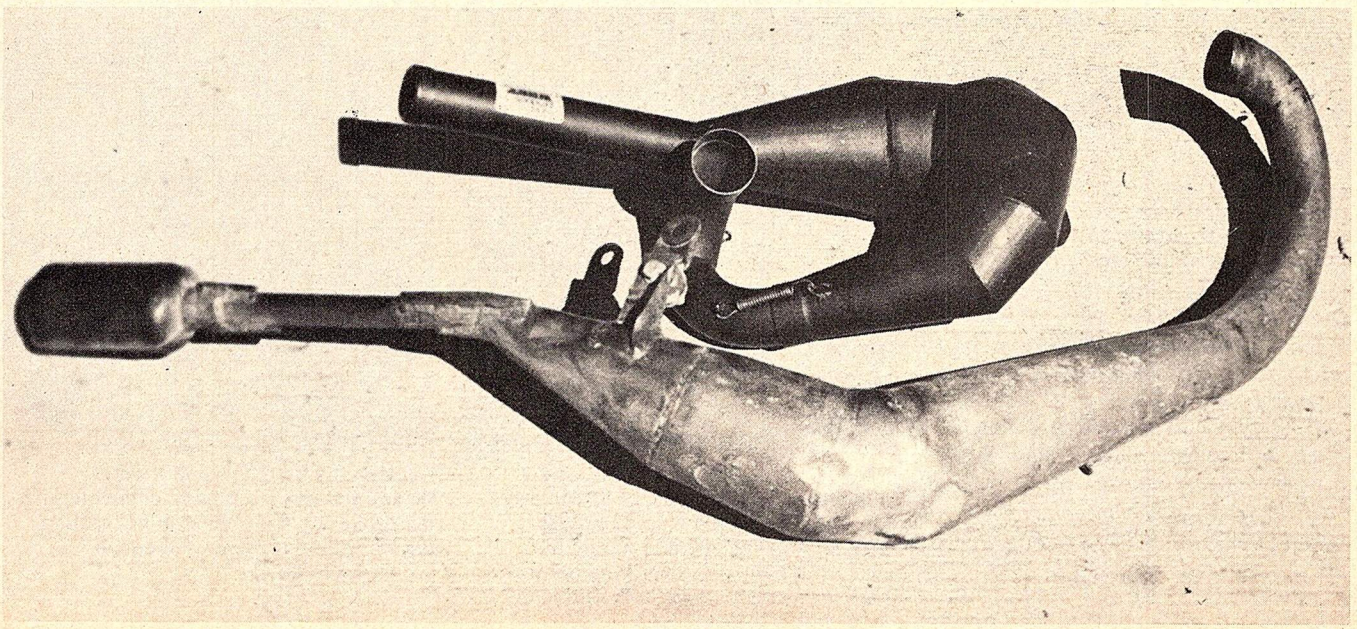
These bikes have a great deal of travel for such a small bike. Just over eight inches on any bike is a lot, but when it's on a 125, it's bizarre. One thing we tend to overlook is the fact that the pipe has the same amount of clearance as the frame. Get down on your knees and measure how much clearance there is between the pipe and the ground. On the RM it's almost ten inches. That's on flat ground, no bumps. What happens when the suspension is compressed over a hooper or a ledge? Right, the pipe is immediately crushed.

In a round about way, this brings us to a new pipe built by Cycle Products West. It's called the snail pipe and winds its way over the front of the cylinder and comes out just in front of the mag case. There's no way, (other than a crash with another bike) that you'll be able to bend up this pipe, simply because anything will have to go right through the tank to get to the pipe.

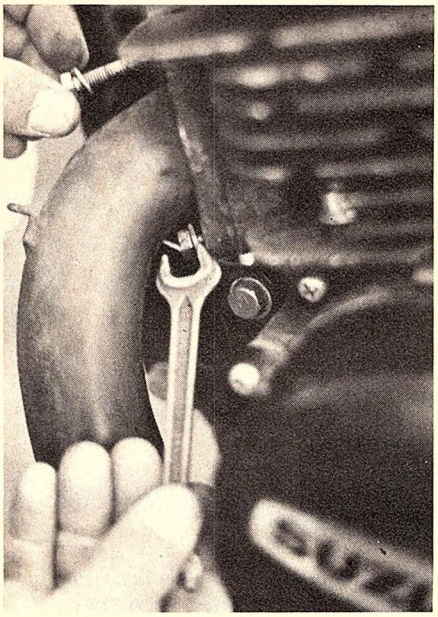
Fitting a normal sized expansion chamber to a bike is a simple task if the pipe is going to run under the frame. Placing a pipe that runs over the top of the motor is not so simple, because the space problem makes working area hard to find.

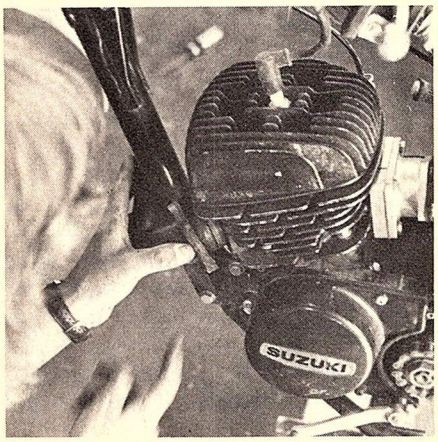
According to the people at C.P.W., they make the pipes as close to the stock dimensions as possible, to fit into the space available. They also make pipes for more top speed, or for a torquer.

The way we mounted our pipe was to take the rubber bumpers and the flat washers from the stock mount. Place

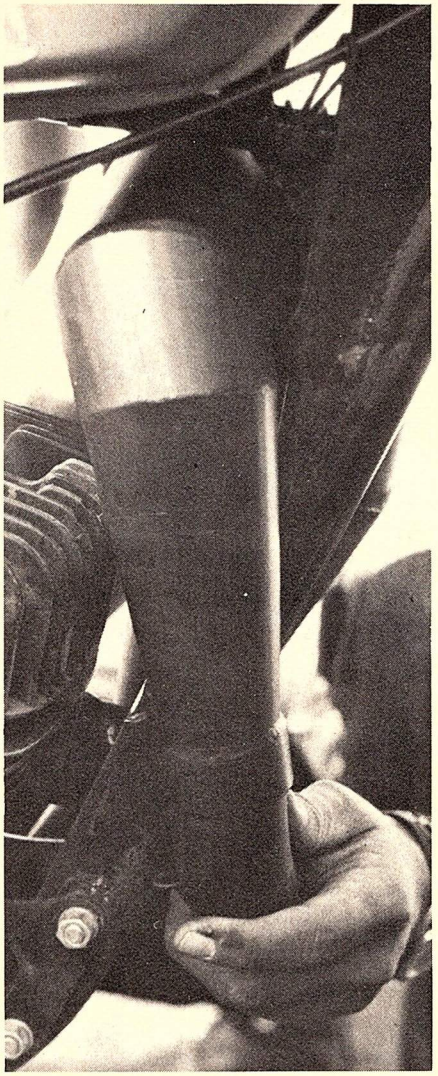


Compared to the stock kit pipe, the CPW pipe has almost the same dimensions, except for the stinger length.





After removing the stocker, place the stock exhaust gasket and flange on the snail head pipe. Slip it into the cylinder, making sure it's completely seated.

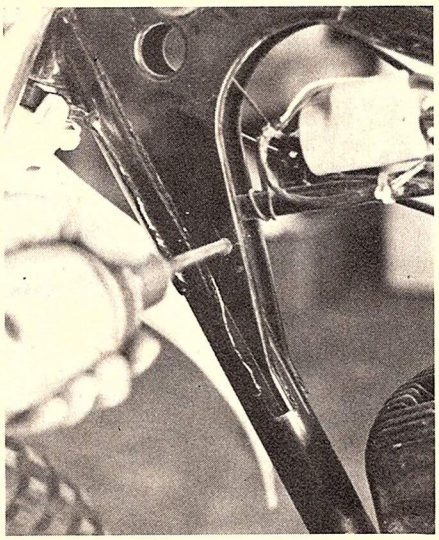


Slide the pipe over the top of the motor and fit the other half of the head section. Make sure the pipe is completely fitted together before marking the mounting hole.

them between the pipe and the frame to get a completely rubber mounted unit. This way, there should be no breakage in the pipe. We experienced none in our testing. Removing the stock pipe is quite a bitch, since the head pipe goes right next to the flange bolts. With the new snail pipe, there's no hassle to unbolt this area.

Fitting the snail pipe can be a real mind boggler if you don't think it out. First thing is install the head pipe in the cylinder, then slip the pipe over the top of the head. Join the two together on the other side and slide the pipe forward. Our snail pipe fit better into the barrel than the stock pipe, it was much tighter.

First thing we noticed was the noise level. It was not really much higher. It's just the fact that the pipe now exits right in front of the motor and all you hear is the pipe. With the stinger going out by the rear wheel you don't hear as much noise. Once you get moving the noise is the same as with the stocker.



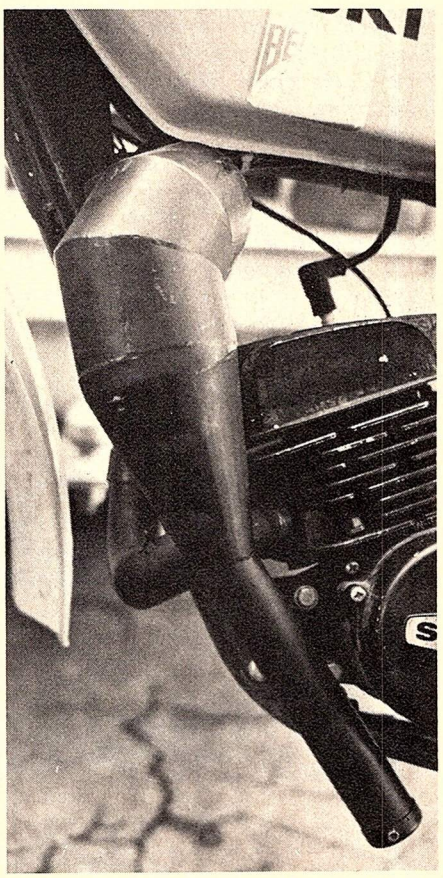
It's only necessary to drill through one side of the gusset, not all the way through. We used the stock rubber bumpers and washers to mount the pipe. You must, however, find another bolt. We used an 8mm bolt, one inch long, with a locking nut.

Most of the power from this pipe is developed in the lower revs, unlike the stock pipe that gets going in the high mid-range. It allows you to keep the bike in the power, since it's handicapped with a five speed gear box. You can't really short shift it, but there's no need to rev the bike as high as you normally would.

If you've been having problems with the down pipe on your bike and want to get one of these pipes made for your bike the people at Cycle Products West can make a pipe like this for any bike that it can possibly fit on. They have them in stock for a few of the small Hondas, but for any other bike they have to be made; it takes about a week. The pipe retails for $69.95 and with a spark arrester the cost is $79.95.

For information or whatever . . .
CYCLE PRODUCTS WEST
11900 W. PICO BLVD.
W. LOS ANGELES, CA 90064
(213) 473-7996

You can also have a pipe built to your specs if you think you've got the hot setup on dimensions. If you consider the fact that you'll probably never have to buy another pipe because of dents, then the 70 bucks is money well spent. ●



Replace the pipe and bolt it down. When in place, the pipe is completely out of the way and never in our testing did we burn our leg on the cones.

CHAIN GANG

LINK-LOK

A different way to keep it all together.

By Jim Mercier

When was the last time you thought about your master links? I can tell you, it's been a long time since I ever thought about those little devils and quite frankly, we've been ignoring them.

It's really not the sort of item that you tighten after each moto, so we tend to forget just how important they are. Sure, there are plenty of good links that can be installed in just about any chain, but here's one that stands out all by itself.

It's called the Link-Lok, and that's what it does; lock the link. Steve Long, from Long Run Products, was the man who did most of the designing of this little unit and was instrumental in us finding out about it.

They use the base of a Diamond master link and the plate. Diamond makes their links so the outside plate has to be pressed on, or pushed in place with a set of pliers. All of these steps are the same with the Link-Lok plate except for the final assembly. Instead of installing the clip, all you have to do is slip the Link-Lok in the dimple in the middle of the plate. Rotate it so the pins align with the two holes in the plate. Rotate it some more and the lock will fit into the slots in the end of the two pins. That's all there is to it.

We installed one on our Bultaco Frontera 250 and have since put about 150 miles on the bike. It hasn't even moved from its resting place one bit. And another bonus is the color. They're nickle plated for easy spotting.

To remove the Link-Lok, just back up the procedure. It will come free of the two slots by simply rotating it slightly. You know how those standard clips always lose their snap after about three removals? These never lose their snap, because there's no snap to them. They just sit there, locked in place.

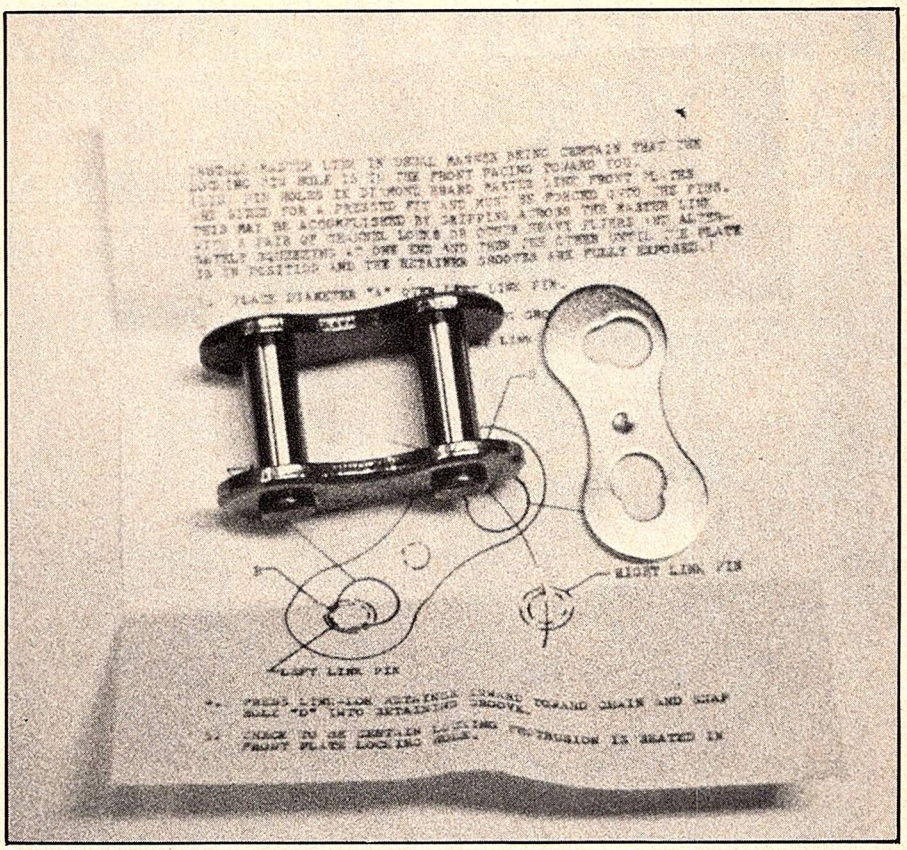
This is the first time ever that someone has come out with a new idea in master links and damn it all, it's a good one.

WHERE TO GET IT:

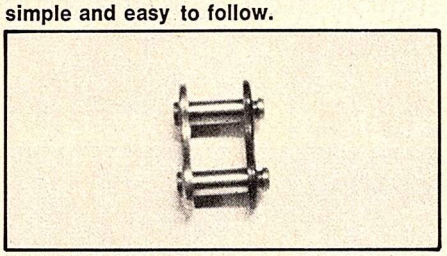
LONG RUN PRODUCTS
P.O. Box 455
Montclair, CA 91763
(714) 981-2204

Ask for Steve Long; you probably won't be able to talk to him, because he's never there when you need him. He's a busy man.

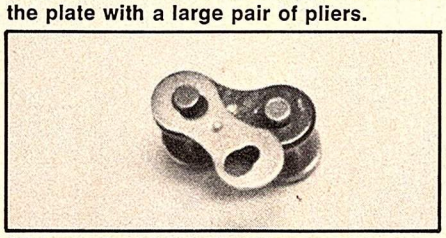
The links are available in 428 and 520 sizes and run $1.25 for the kit. ●



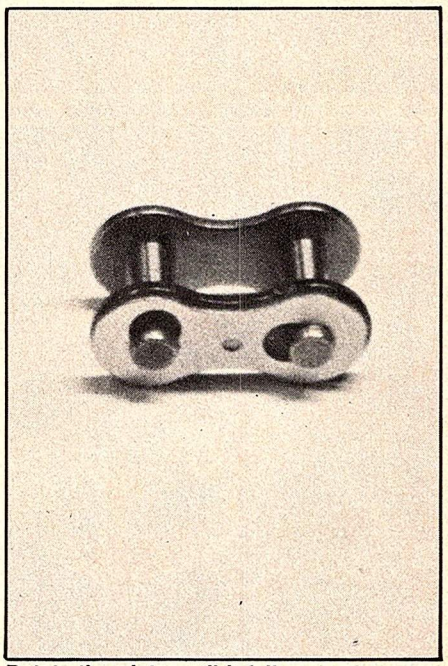
Each kit comes with the necessary goodies to install it in your chain. Instructions are simple and easy to follow.



Place the flat plate onto the link far enough so the grooves in the pins are exposed. With the link in the chain, it should reach bottom as the grooves become accessible. It's easiest to install the plate with a large pair of pliers.



Slide on the Link-Lok sothe straight slot is facing to your left or toward the countershaft sprocket. This will prevent the link from being knocked off when running the bike. If it is hit, all it will do is put the link on harder. Slide the Link-Lok completely into this slot.



Rotate the plate until it falls over the pin and rotate it until it slips into the groove in the link. Make sure the punch mark in the center of the plate is completely in its hole.

We learned about these from DIRT RIDER magazine . . . but don't let that scare you.

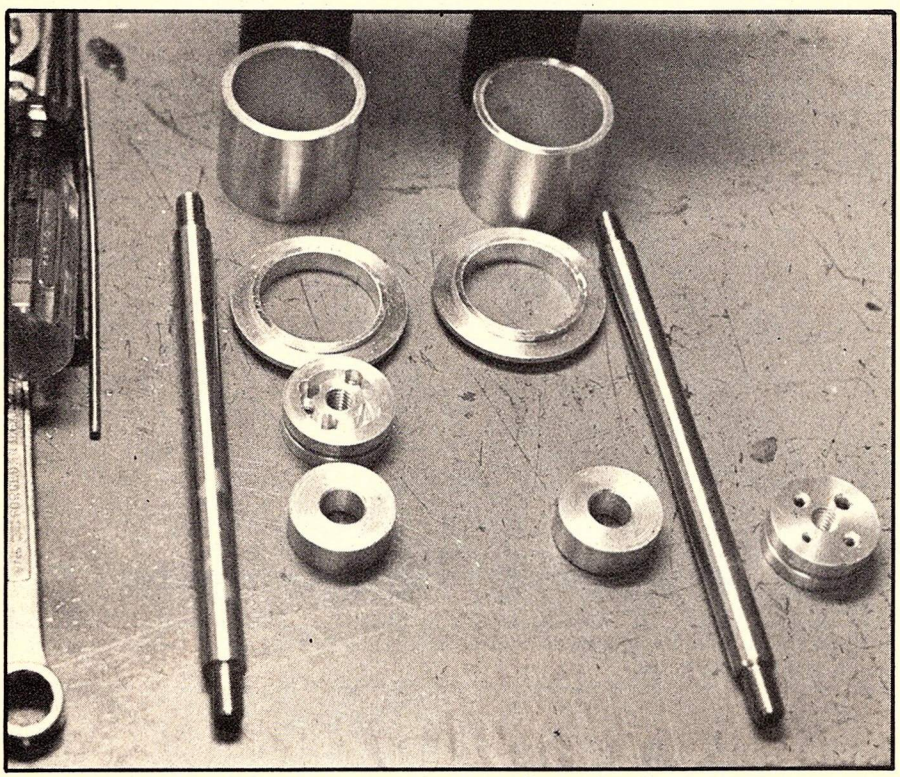
WORKS PERFORMANCE SHOCKS

No. They're not reworked Curnutts. Take a closer look.

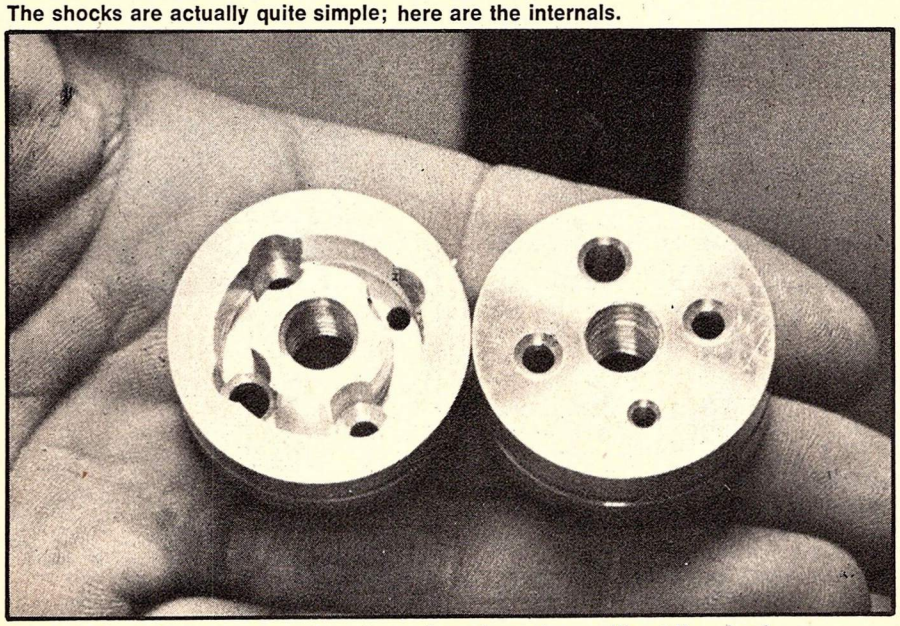
By the Editors of MODERN CYCLE

We got turned on to these units by our friends at DIRT RIDER magazine; the fellers in the office next to ours. You see, CHALLENGE PUBLISHING has four bike books: MC, DIRT RIDER, MINICYCLE ACTION and STREET BIKE. That's why you don't see any minicycles in MC and any 750 Hondas in DIRT RIDER and so forth. But, I digress.

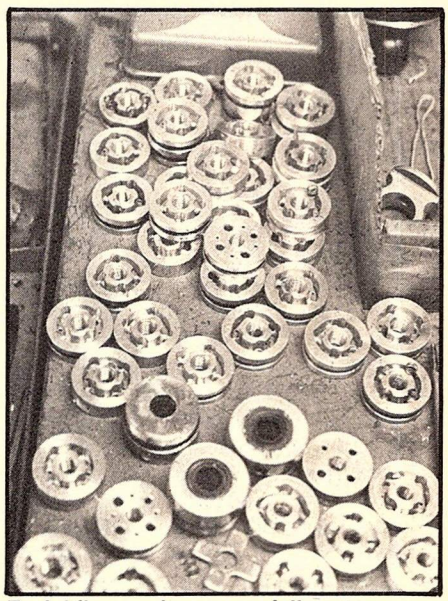
One of these people—Dave Schoonmaker—recently won a whole bunch of Gold Medals and such in some National Qualifiers on his Bultaco Frontera and claimed half of the battle was won by using Works Performance shocks. We met Gil Vallencourt from WP and he offered to set up a pair of



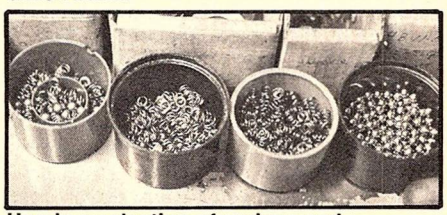
The shocks are actually quite simple; here are the internals.



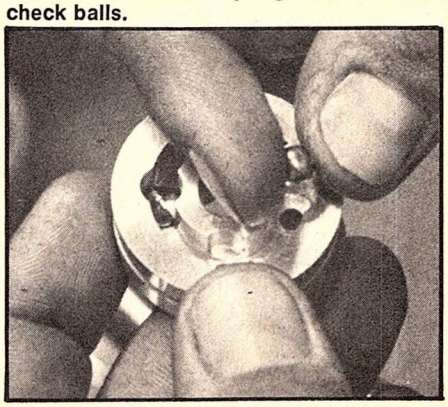
Heart of the WP shock is the damping valve, shown here without the check balls and springs.



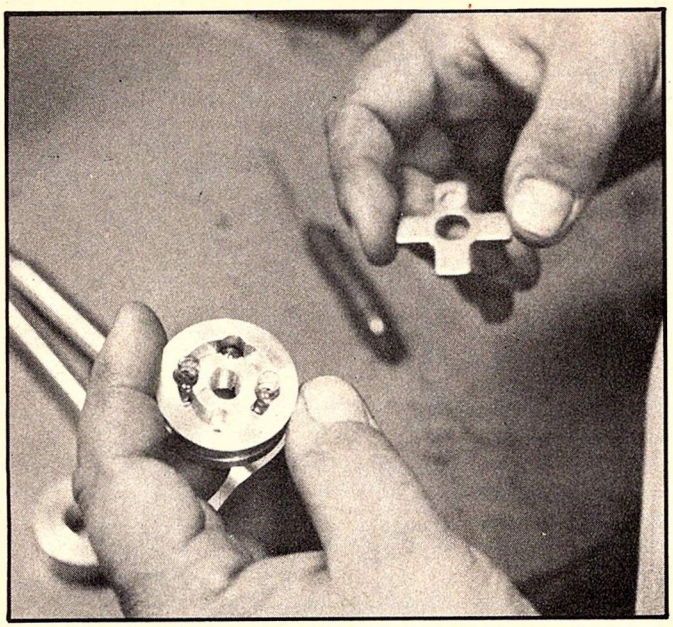
Each bike requires a specially set up valve based on angle of the shock, length and location on the swingarm and frame. Most of the valves can be modified quite easily just by changing hole sizes or spring rates on the check balls.



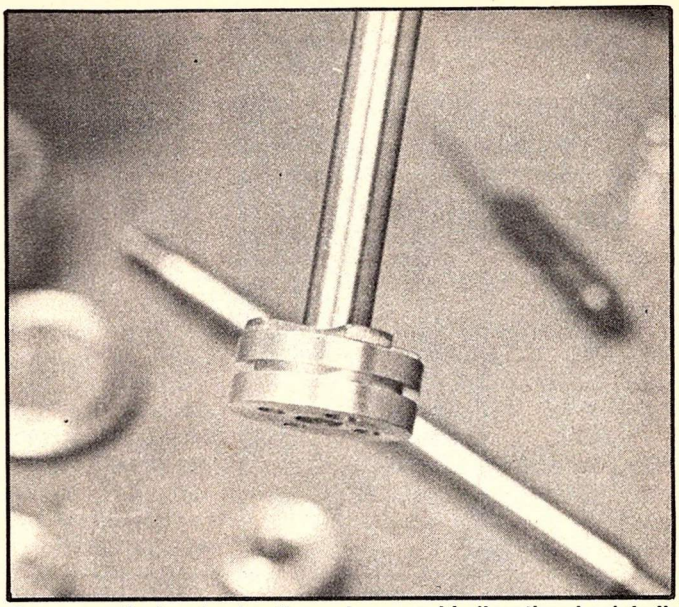
Here's a selection of springs and check balls.



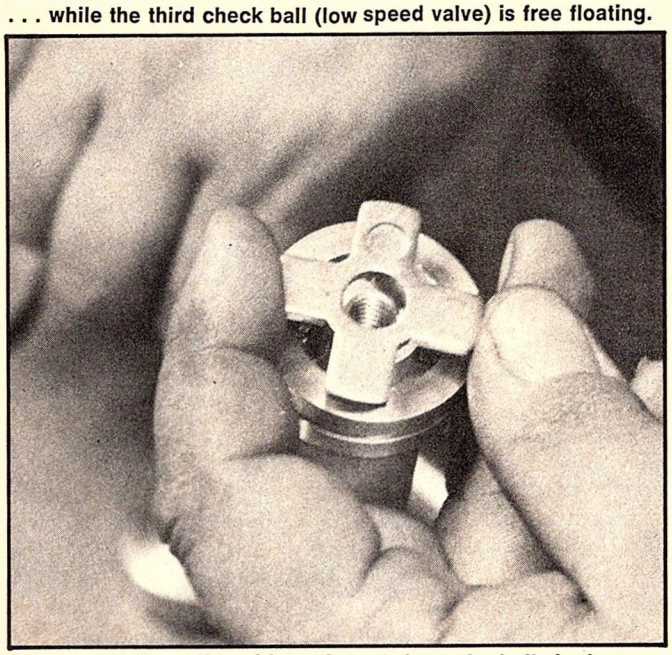
Two of the check balls are spring loaded . . .



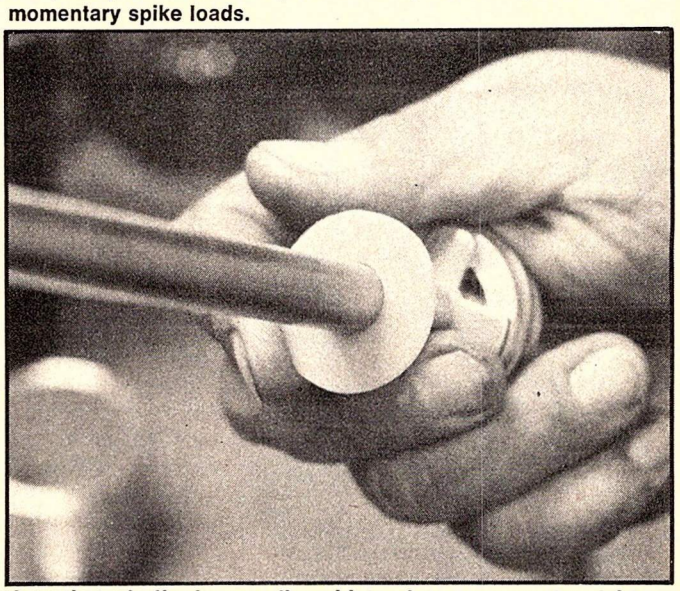
. . . while the third check ball (low speed valve) is free floating.



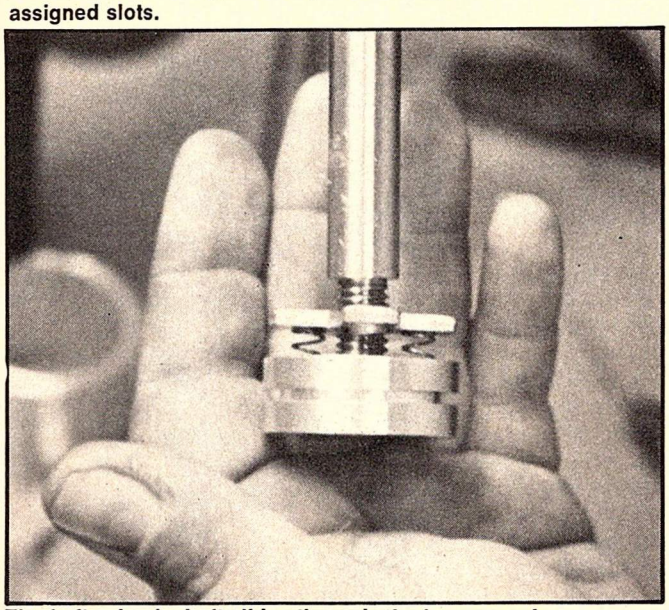
On our particular shocks, the springs would allow the check balls to move out of the way with 600 psi of internal force. This completely eliminated the problem of hydraulicking due to momentary spike loads.



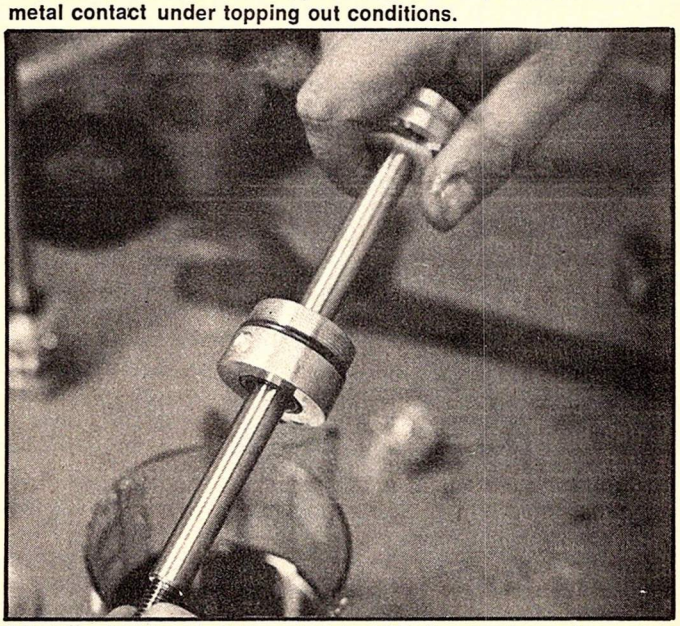
A keeper is then slipped into place to keep the balls in the assigned slots.



A urethane buffer is now slipped into place to prevent metal to metal contact under topping out conditions.

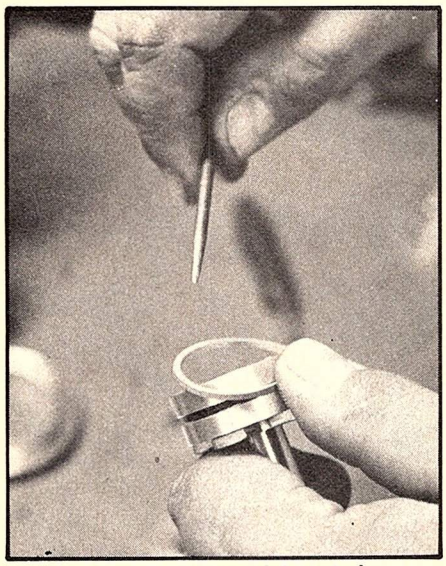


The hefty shock shaft slides through the keeper and screws into the damping poppet.

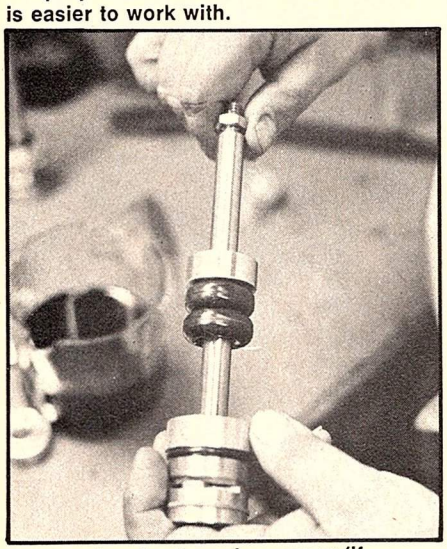


After dipping the shaft threads into ATF, the shock cap is gently nudged over the shaft.

Gil has a neat little trick for sealing the damping valve. First, he puts a rubber O-ring in each ring slot . . .



. . . then installs the special coated hard ring. This way, the O-ring gives pressure and the ring doesn't wear. The ring is made of a substance with the properties of Teflon, but is easier to work with.



Rubber doughnuts and a spacer (if needed) go over the shaft assembly next.

shocks for us to try on the pair of Suzukis we've been testing for the last few months.

We looked over his shoulder as he built a pair for us and explained the workings of his concept. Gil is well qualified to mess around with shocks.

Gil believes that the only function of a spring is to hold the motorcycle up and that damping—properly dialed in—can control all the bumps delivered to the rear end. Consequently, most of his shocks run springs ranging from 60 to 100 pounds—maximum.

We shot the assembly of his shocks, so you can see how simple his pressure demand valve is, yet how effectively the thing works.

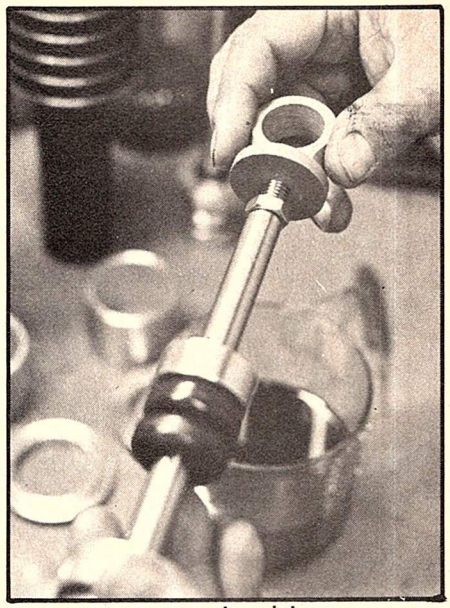
Basically, Gil's shock is a single tube (none of that inner and outer body stuff) made from chrome moly and a shock piston rides in it. Damping control is in stages. There are four holes in the shock piston—one of them is always open. This hole determines the rebound damping and the compression damping. However, it only controls the compression damping to a point. Any time a sudden spike pressure is present in the shock—like when you hit a square bump—the other two holes open and allow the shock oil to dump through, preventing a momentary hydraulic lock-up. The fourth hole—Gil calls it the low speed damping—is covered by a free floating ball—that opens and closes as the pressure demands. The other two holes have balls covering them too, but are spring loaded and only open up when the pressure gets high enough.

One feature that they have, is that the balls close instantly after they open to relieve any spike loads and the shocks has full compression damping again.

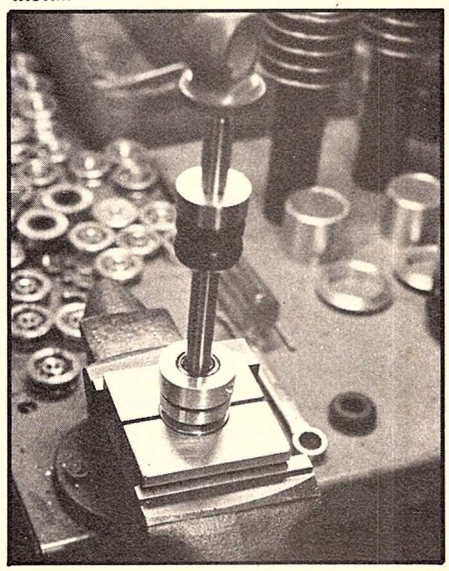
Obviously, the shock has a great deal of adjustability, what with various hole sizes available, different spring rates on the high speed balls and different viscosities of shock fluids. Gil chooses to go with ATF as his favorite shock fluid. It's available, it's cheap and it works.

Each and every set of shocks is set up for the particular bike, taking into consideration the rider's weight, the angle and position of the shock and the type of riding the rider is going to do. If the rider feels that he needs more compression damping, or more rebound, (or less,) Gil sets it up for him free of charge until the customer is happy.

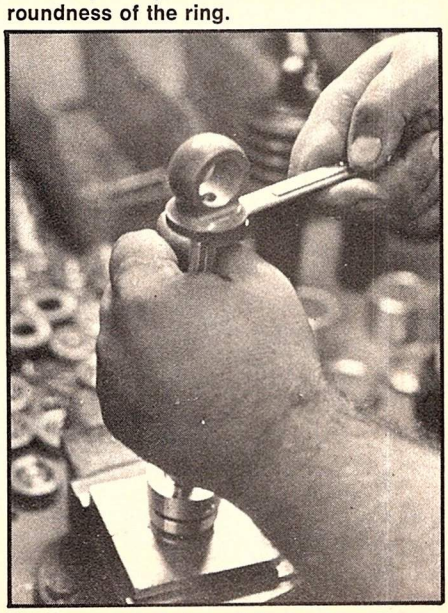
The only problem he has is people who won't realize that the shock can be dialed in to anything the rider wants. His biggest problems have come from fellow magazine types who make their



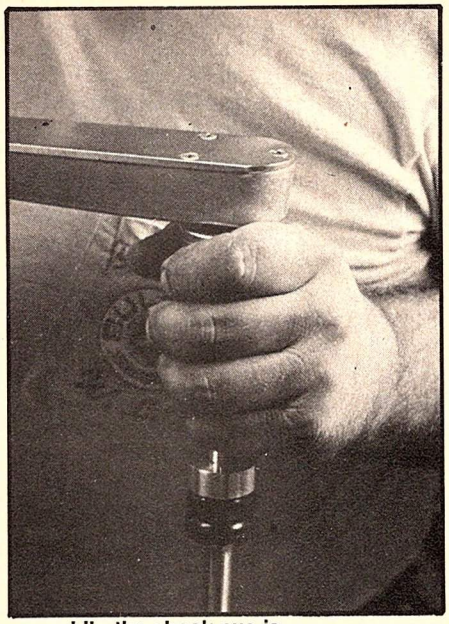
Then the jam nut and eyelet are installed.



Gil uses a special holding tool to tighten the whole works up. This tool does two things: it holds the entire assembly and perfects the roundness of the ring.

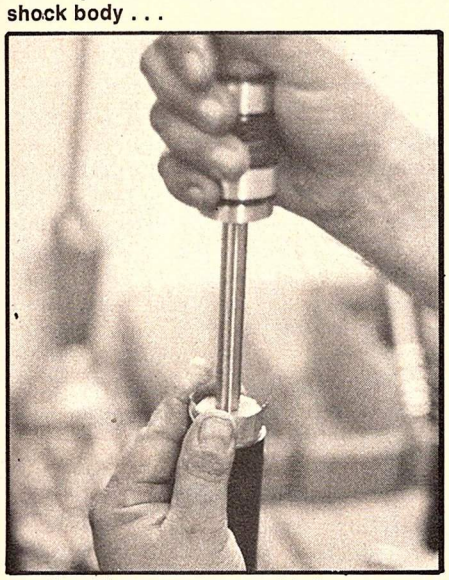


The jam nut is help solidly in place . . .



. . . while the shock eye is snubbed down.

ATF is poured into the finned aluminum shock body . . .



. . . then the poppet assembly is slipped past the threads of the shock body with the aid of some thin shim stock.

judgment on the shock by bouncing up and down on the saddle and saying the unit is too soft. He related this incident to us:

Gil: "I got a call from **** Bike Magazine. They said they had an MT Honda they wanted to try some of my shocks on. Now, I didn't even have the specs on the MT, so I said I'd bring a set of shocks out and we'd see if they worked. When I got there and bolted the shocks on, one of the guys pushed up and down on the rear end and said 'This is way too soft—that'll never work.' The son of a bitch never even rode it and called it bad. Can you imagine that. Another one of the so called testers rode my CZ at about twenty miles per hour over the whoop-diedoos and brought the bike right back in. Said they were no good. Hey! I've got my shocks set up to charge over the rough stuff and this guy is barely on the pilot jet. I told him to go out and get it on to see how they felt, but he wouldn't do it. That's chickenshit, I think."

We thought so, too. The first set of shocks we got from Gil felt way too soft, but we entered a WP equipped bike in a 100-mile desert race and rode the distance with them. The units worked fine on the bumps, in fact better than anything we'd tried to date, but we felt the rebound was less than perfect. The rear end returned to the ground too quickly. After taking the shocks back to Gil and reporting the results, he changed the rebound characteristics for us. The next time we rode the bike was at Hopetown. Our test bike won its class. Need we say more? And they did not fade during the nearly one hour event.

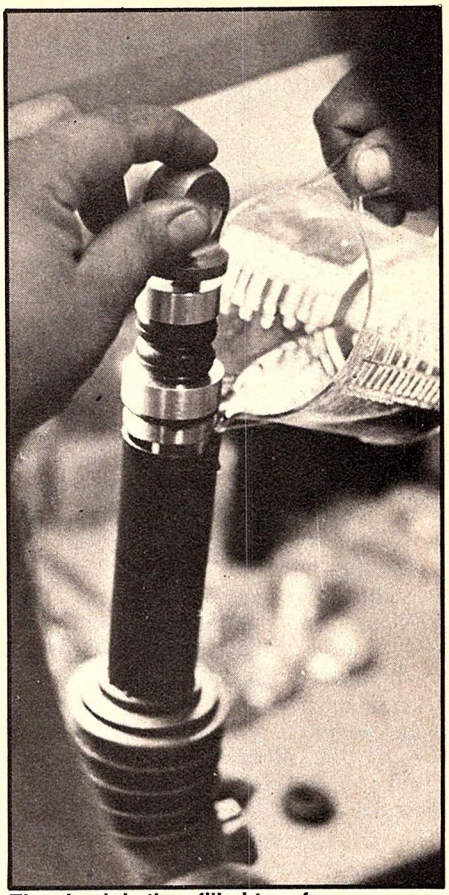
We think the WP shocks are excellent and highly recommend them to any serious competition rider. The price is right—last we heard it was around a hundred bucks, with springs—and Gil will dial them in for you if you're unhappy with the first effort.

He's compiling information from all the riders who are using the units and is attempting to come up with general guidelines beyond the weight of the rider and the position of the shocks.

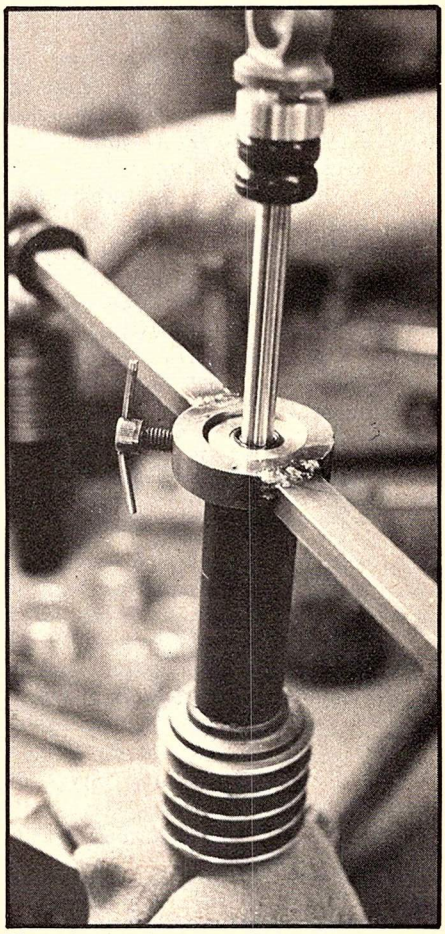
It's a harsh reality that a fast rider has different requirements than a slower rider. Therefore, each and every shock must be set up for what the rider needs. Anybody that tells you that you can bolt on perfection right off the shelf with no fine tuning or adjusting, has his head up his ass. It's as simple as that.

WHERE TO GET IT:

WORKS PERFORMANCE PRODUCTS
20970 Knapp Street
Chatsworth, CA 91311
(213) 998-1977 ●



The shock is then filled to a few millimeters below the threads.



Then the cap is snugged down with a special tool that Gil uses. How tight? Good and tight, says Gil. That's it, except for the springs and keepers.

BACK IN THE SADDLE

(Continued from page 5)

ly; or just oscillating wildly from side to side. This is the supermarket version of a tank slapper.

One time, while attempting to beat my record for two laps at the local RALPH'S SUPERMARKET, I took out a display of tomato soup and pinned a whining eight-year-old against the toilet paper shelves. If it had not been for the two-ply Northern tissue, I shudder to think of what might have happened to the kid. Imagine, being maimed for life by a speeding and out of control shopping cart.

Modifications of all sorts can be used for the cornering practice. I find it helpful to wear slippery shoes for sliding around the corners. It gets exciting when you get right alongside the cart, hanging on like a sidecar monkey, with the wheels crossed up and skittering on the slick surface. For a real thrill, you can let loose of the cart and merely skid along on your shoes. This greatly improves your balance—a valuable thing for any racer. We'd recommend that you leave the market soon after letting the cart go, as it can do very creative things before it slows down and stops.

One thing that is very dangerous, is the wearing of tennis shoes when indulging in SUPERMARKET CORNERING techniques. Often, the weight of the cart is equal to—or greater than—the operator. When this occurs, the dreaded "low-side" is a distinct possibility. The cart will get slightly ahead of the operator and the shoes will take a sudden bite. This in turn stretches the rider out momentarily and leaves him clinging to a cart with all the momentum of a crazed buffalo. When the limit is reached, generally the "rider" will find himself sliding along face down on the floor heading for God-knows-what on the lower shelves.

Even worse is the Supermarket "high-side," the exact opposite of the "low-side." Here, traction is momentarily caught by the sticky tennis shoes and the cart stops at the same moment. If you catch the edge of the cart in the gut, more than likely you'll shortly thereafter be catapulted over the cart and its contents. It is not a pretty sight to see a grown man nestled in a stack of cheap chuck steaks. And, at 70 cents a pound, you just might be bagged in plastic by one of those wild-eyed ladies before you can recover. All in all, it's a dangerous business.

FREEWAY FLEXES. Even though this might sound more lethal than the supermarket activities, it isn't anywhere near as dangerous. The idea here is to see how long you can wait before switching lanes. Ideally, you should be in the far fast lane traveling with the normal flow of traffic. When you see your off-ramp coming up, wait until the last possible second before making the transition. The existing record for the lane change is held by Fearless Ralph of Van Nuys, California, who went from the fast lane to an off-ramp in 2.37 seconds, with only forty-nine feet of forward travel. The black marks still are permanently scorched into the San Diego Freeway as mute testimony to his feat. And, the last payment to the bank (for the $722 ticket) will be made in two more months.

Another popular reflex testing exercise is the DUAL MASH movement. It's best not to try this little number in heavy traffic—as it is frowned upon quite heavily by the authorities. The technique is simple: Merely stomp on

STROKIN' IT

(Continued from page 44)

of the sudden, I jumped off one of those ravines and landed right in the middle of the check. The man holding the clip board had to jump back from being killed by my Bultaco. All three of the people at that check just stood there looking at me, until one guy asked, "What in the hell are you doing here?"

"I'm in this race, you dummy." The kid just stood there looking at my number plate. I couldn't imagine what the problem was until the man with the number board caught my eye. It was the flipping of the card that nearly threw me into shock. Sheet, I was 9 minutes early. The kid that marks your time card was speechless; all he could say was "You must have been going a little faster than you should have."

I pulled over to the side and waited for Jon. He stopped and talked to the riders who were sitting on top of the hill and found out they were ahead of time and were all waiting for the clock to catch up. He waited for a while, then pulled into the check only three minutes early. He was panic stricken and yelled at me for a long time. All he wanted was a 7mm wrench to tighten the top of the Bing.

Since we were so early, we talked to the people at the check point. We found out some interesting things from these guys. Like, if you're early, you get two points per minute deducted and for being late, only one.

Great, I'd come only four and a half miles and had lost 18 points. We fixed Jon's carb and headed for the next check. All of the terrain that followed the second section was a lot like mountain goat trails. Up ridges, down cliffs, over hills. Absolutely great. We rode at a fast, yet somewhat conservative pace until we'd come across a few surprises. One of those was this hill! It wasn't your normal

MR. KNOW-IT-ALL

(Continued from page 12)

been produced and offer the most advanced solution to the rear suspension problem known to mankind. These units sell for $110.00 per damper or $220.00 a pair. For a man on a budget, the gas filled standard type Fox Shox are only $99.00 a pair and they are rebuildable. Our December issue has a test article on the Fox Airshox—read about it. Also, Ferguson, there is no toss-up. You should have known Modern Cycle *is world champion.*

MODERN PORNO?

Dear Mr. Know-It-All:

I am 14 years old and live in North Carolina, and I am interested in trials racing. Could you please tell me the location of trials courses in N.C.? There is one more thing I ask of you: my father thinks racing is dangerous. How stupid! Could you please tell me how I could get that crazy idea out of his head? I would appreciate this information very much.

Thanks,
Steve Sherrill

P.S. I have some good news and some bad news. Good news: I love your magazine. Bad News! You need more crash pictures.

Dear Steve:

Number One, Steve: English observed trials is a form of competition, not racing. Number Two: Get a subscription to the monthly AMA news. They list all forms of sanctioned competition to be held in the upcoming month by district covering the entire country. Number Three: We just got a letter from your dad saying that all the crash pictures in our magazine convinced him that racing is dangerous. He has been sneaking into your room and reading all the cycle books and magazines you hide in your bottom dresser drawer. Next month, stuff a couple of copies of "Modern Porno" in with the bike mags and maybe he will get off your case.

SUPER TURTLE?

Dear Sirs:

I have been riding for 3 or 4 years and have kept up with a lot of magazines like yours since I started, and what I can't figure out is why you have hardly any enduro articles. I've ridden

both the brake and the gas at the same time when approaching an off-ramp. The behavior of the car will be unusual, to say the least.

This has the additional benefit of providing exercise for not only the legs, but the hands as well. White knuckles are common during the transition.

ESCALATOR ACCELERATION. Much of the pure excitement of a high speed straight can be achieved on any escalator that happens to be going down. Merely run like hell down the moving escalator. The real trick is getting off at the bottom. A good escalator runner can get up to forty-five or so. Now, if you know anything about the human body, then you'll be aware that nobody in the world can run much faster than twenty miles per hour. Get the picture? Only the quickest reactions will keep a fast escalator runner from hurtling off in to the store like a wounded wart hog. In 1972, Fearless Ralph took out 27 shoppers cleanly as he reeled out toward the street. As far as we know, this is the record.

After working out on this movement for some time, a long straight should hold absolutely no fear for the competition rider.

PHYSICAL ENDURANCE TRAINING. Many racers tend to give up in the later stages of a race, simply because their bodies are burning with fatigue. A good rider can force himself to endure this and still press on regardless. One way to test your mental control, is to *not* go to the bathroom when drinking beer.

There's an old Czech saying: "You cannot buy beer—you can only rent it." How true. The idea behind this strenuous exercise is to hold off until the last possible moment. The agony of burning legs over endless miles of whoopdies is nothing compared to the agony of a bladder full of cheap beer. Only the bravest can go two hours without relief. But, that's what separates the champions from the also-rans. Again, we must refer to Fearless Ralph for the record. At one sitting, he consumed two six packs of beer without leaving the room. Unfortunately, his eyes are still slightly yellow from the experience. A word of warning to the unwary.

TRIGGER REFLEXES. One of the most vital things to any racer, is quick cat-like reflexes. In order to make the most of ordinary every day life as a valuable aid to racing, I have modified my toaster to help me achieve maximum reactions.

The stock spring that pops the toast up was replaced with a pair of heavy duty exhaust pipe springs. Now, when the toast pops up, it POPS UP! Sometimes seven or eight feet in the air. In order to catch the stuff before it lands in someone's cereal, you've got to move like a jungle cat. Some care must be taken when choosing the spring to modify the toaster. My first spring was overly powerful and two slices of whole wheat blew out a light fixture, raining down broken glass on a munching family.

These are but a few of the things you can do to keep you sharp for the track; even if you only race occasionally. Of course, you may devise other —more elaborate—methods to keep you sharp. Your imagination is your only limit. Just avoid the mistake Fearless Ralph made a few years back. He got so involved in the training exercises mentioned above, that the actual racing became rather boring to him and he hasn't bothered to race since.

However, watch your step when you see a large, hirsute individual careening around your local supermarket with number plates on his shopping cart. ●

---

hill, but rather a gradual sloper that you didn't realize you were in, until it was too late. I came over the top very fast and picked my way through about a hundred riders who were spread out all over the hillside. When I got to the bottom I couldn't believe that I had made it without bailing off. Jon was right behind me traveling at the same speed. We sat at the bottom of the hill and watched all sorts of bizarre acts occurring on the hill.

All through the rest of the first loop, we had nothing but problems. Not with the bikes, but with the clock. Each and every check, we arrived early. We had lost more points by the time the second loop was supposed to start, than the rest of the riders lost in the entire event.

After completing the loop, we had a short break before we had to start on the second loop. It gave us time to fill up the tanks and have a short rest. Somehow, we screwed up again and got to the start of the second loop ten minutes late.

We didn't even start the loop and had already lost 10 points. That was the last straw, we took off at full throttle and rode the entire loop very fast. Fast enough to lose another 35 points. Jon got lost somewhere between check two and three which proved to be helpful, because it slowed him down to where he zeroed the last two checks. Jon dropped a total of 44 points and I dropped a grand total of 65 big ones. We rode the entire race like it was a motocross, but it was a kick in the butt. That wasn't the idea of the event, but what can you expect from a couple of motocross freaks?

I just read in the newspaper that there's an enduro up in Oregon that's going to be using the ISDT scoring system. That means you can be early to the checks and not lose a single point. Now that's for me. If I can just get *to* the enduro on time. That's the hard part. ●

---

motocross for 2 years and then one of my friends down at the neighborhood bike shop lent me one of his bikes and I went with him to an enduro event and it freaked me out. I liked it. It has more excitement, more of a challenge because the terrain is always changing, always something new.

I know most of the racing public is all for motocross, but I think if they would try racing just one enduro, a lot would probably agree with me. I own a Hodie Combat Wombat 125 now and it's set up for enduros and I know it's no superbike, but I have fun. I sold my moto-x bike and invested in this bike. Well, good luck with your mag. It's a damn good publication, but not enough enduro.

Sorry this is so sloppy. I've had a few too many brews tonight and am sure you're having one while reading this.

Stoker Joe
Nowersville, Tenn.

P.S. My chick thinks Sieman has a nice bod. I think he looks like a turtle, but he writes a good article.

The overwhelming majority of drinkers will become inebriated and then succumb to moods of depression, fits of violence, crying jags or some other anti-social behavior. Recently, I have been inundated with correspondence from drinkers like yourself who imbibe to an excess and then feel a compelling urge to sit down and write Mr. Know-It-All a letter. I suspect the alcohol gives you fellows a false sense of courage and you are anticipating that I will have a little pity on a guy that has a few too many and writes in a sloppy sentimental letter on beer-stained stationery. No way Joe.

This column is intended as a clearinghouse of technical and racing information. My readers are simply not interested in hearing this type of slobbering commentary from an ex-racer that just can't hold his beer any longer. I have seen too many good motocrossers fall in with the wrong group of friends and deteriorate to the same sad state that you are in. Joe, let's be honest. You just can't cut it on an MX track anymore and you are trying to soften the pain with booze. Stop trying to fool yourself and face reality. You are washed up as far as MX is concerned and you won't have any more fun the rest of your life. Accept this and you will be a better person for it.

If it is any consolation, your problem

is a fairly common one. Why we even have a situation similar to yours right here on our own staff. If you read Jim Mercier's "Strokin' It" column in the December issue, you can interpret all the clues of a man in the early stages of decline. One last thing, if your chick thinks Sieman's body is nice, then she either has a water-buffalo fetish, or she has been helping you tap the kegs.

SAGA OF JACK SHAFT

Dear Mr. Know-It-All:

Could you tell me how Gaylon Mosier had his sprockets rigged up? I am a proud owner of a RM 125. Well, it's my brothers till I get the money. What could I do to make it more competitive. What is the difference between a hopped-up RM 125 and Gaston Rahier's Go all the way.

Chip Stalegg
Barwick, Pa.

Dear Chip:

Here is the inside scoop. Gaylon was out practicing one day and crashed right into a kid riding a Briggs and Stratton 2 h.p. minibike. Gaylon's right footpeg and brake pedal was hopelessly snarled into the jackshaft and drive chain of the little tot's bike. Frustrated and angry, Mosier was about to deliver a blistering backhand to the whimpering urchin, when the incredible idea of using a jackshaft linkage on his Maico struck him right between the eyes. He has since successfully experimented with the system and rumor has it that the kid he ran over that day is listed as the co-inventor on the patent applications.

As far as your RM 125 is concerned, you could probably do a little bit of front and rear suspension modification. Pay your brother off first and then we will discuss your future expenditures. To be quite frank with you, Chip, if you can't afford a ball point pen, and have to write your letters with a dull #1 pencil, I don't expect you will be in a financial position to buy anything more expensive than a Clark bar. The biggest differences between a hot RM 125 and Gaston's factory bike is the weight, horsepower and the suspension. These are things you should have known.

HELP IS ON THE WAY

To the Great Mr. K.:

Well the good old USMC has stuck it to me again—after a 13 month tour of the Far East I'm ready to go stateside. California was my dream—to be back in those wide open deserts was the main thought that helped me keep my shit together while overseas. Now I got orders to MCAS, Cherry Point, North Carolina.

Where the hell does a guy ride a dirt bike there? Are there any clubs in the area? You being *MC* Midwest Editor, I figured you would be the one to ask. I won't tell you that your help will be greatly appreciated, as you can take it for granted. All I can say about your column is "What balls you have!"

Keep up the outstanding work.

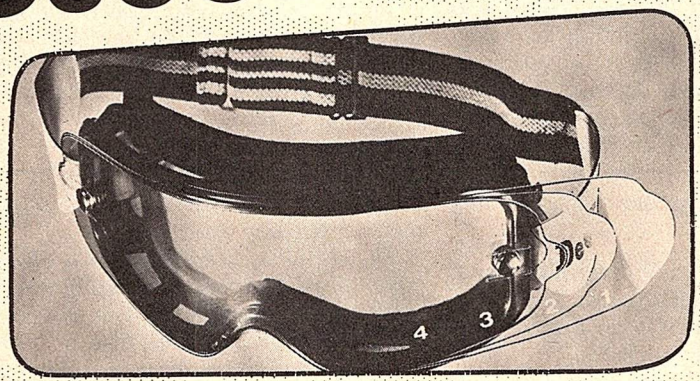
Joe "Skeeter" Viscito
Corporal, USMC

P.S. Please excuse any abusive language or misspelled words, as being overseas for a year tends to make a person somewhat less than civilized.

Corporal, the entire staff extends a warm welcome on your return to the states. Just be damn glad they didn't stick you in Racine, Wisconsin for the next 18 months. North Carolina has some of the most fantastic riding in the country. Most don't know it, but there is a real hot bed of off-road activity in that state. An old friend of mine owned a Maico shop in nearby Chapel Hill a few years and you might try getting in touch with him. The AMA news will list all the events in your area.

Actually, Skeeter, you are the fellow with a lot of guts. If that Sergeant Johnson, that hates dirt bikers, is still stationed at Cherry Point, you are in for some heavy K.P. duty. Good luck. ●

DeCOSTER MX GOGGLES



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POST ENTRIES

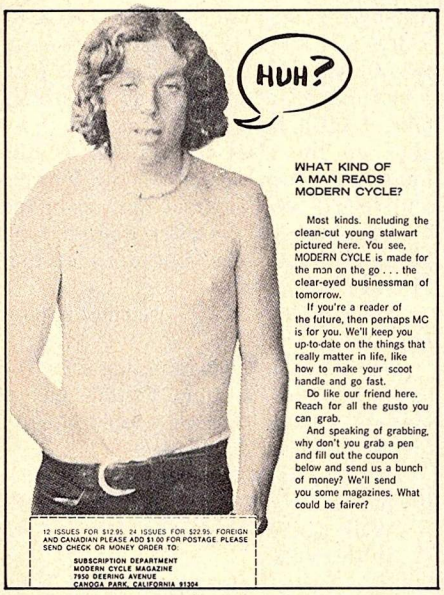
(Continued from page 8)

So there you have it! If you didn't understand what I just did then I'll tell you: with just a few downfalls, *Modern Cycle* is easily the *BEST* magazine you can buy. Any fag that doesn't like what I just said well then may an American eagle fly up your amal carb and drop a big load of batshit in your overpriced beers. . . .

Bruce Parsons
123 Thornhill R.D.
Cherry Hill, New Jersey 08003

P.S. Make a column for a numerical evaluation just like *Popular Cycling's*. P.P.S. Don't give in to those people who want you to stop swearing, let them go read *Jack and Jill* magazine or something!!!!!!

Bruce Parsons
Cherry Hill, N.J.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BURN THEM BOOKS

I am writing to you about your ad for subscribing to your magazine on page 9 of the December, 1975 issue. I am sending it back as I think it is so disgusting I do not wish to contaminate our incinerator at school. I have enjoyed seeing the students, ages eight through twelve, read your magazine. They enjoy the photos and articles. But how can I possibly justify letting them continue to read this magazine if this picture and articles are indicative of your editorial policy?

Sincerely,
Mrs. J. Faucett, Librarian
Joint City School District No. 1
Shepard Hills School
Oak Creek, WI 53154

Whattsamatter, Mrs. Faucett; don't any of your students scratch their balls? Where do you get off being a censor? Does the Joint City (Joint City?) School District know that you've taken the Constitution in your own hands? ●

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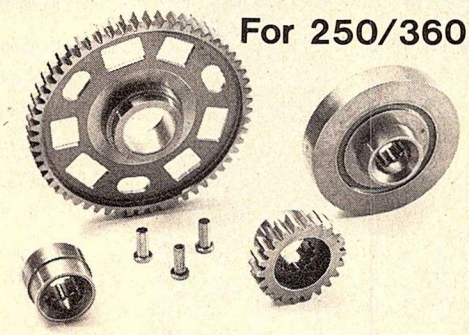

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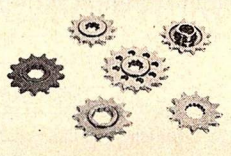

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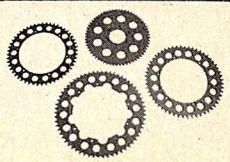

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SUNDAY

(Continued from page 44)

gone and perhaps he isn't as old as I had previously thought. In fact, his face looks almost flabby-puffy. Also, he seems to have some difficulty forming his words. This, I decide, must be an impediment, and promise myself not to make fun. His first words to me out of his oddly distorted mouth (it seems to be swelling before my eyes) are something like this:

"Phoo gave you fermishen to gride on gliss gland?"

I know immediately that it isn't an impediment. (God, it sure is weird how his face keeps growing.) Anyway, I resign myself to an impending pidgin conversation with some foreigner who is going to try to kick me off my own U.S. soil.

About the same time, way off in the distance, I begin to hear the THOCK, THOCK, THOCK of the blown-out Bassani on Cotter's Kawasaki. At first, I just marvel at my own abilities on a bike. I must have *really* smoked those guys up the road to the top of the mountain. Then I realize how lucky I am when I see Cotter at the top of the hill looking down. Cotter doesn't look little; his bike does, but even at that distance, he doesn't.

"Hey," I shouted, "I sure smoked you guys' ass!"

The old man quits rambling with the appearance of Cotter. Cotter has a kind of calming effect on people.

"Did you ride down there?"

"Sure," I say, knowing full well that if I had, he would, Volksie or no.

"Well, where's your bike?"

"In the Volks."

"You going home already?" (Cotter has a dry, somewhat wry wit.)

"No," I yell back. "C'mon down here."

So without further ado, Cotter starts down. With his compression release phutting off and on down the hill, his form rivals DeCoster, Malcolm Smith or Torsten Hallman. I'm amazed when, on final approach to the Volkswagen, he uses the front deck as a berm, picks up the front of his ultra-light Bighorn, plants his right foot, and kind of wheelies in place to a stop. He sets the stand, gets off, appraises the gravity of the situation, and says, "Hey, that's neat—been up it yet?"

I think that must be the last straw for the old German, or whatever he is. He starts screaming unintelligibly and fondling the dents in the hood of the Volks. Then he starts pulling on the rear wheel of my bike, which sort of sags over the driver's door. He stumbles over to Cotter and sort of splutter-cries at his belt buckle. Personally, I am getting a little tired of all the hassle.

So I search my mind for a way to kind of smooth over the situation without getting Cotter involved, as it isn't really his fault, and besides our Sunday ride is getting ruined. So I say, "if we can get this car out of here we can get a pretty good shot at it from the bottom." We are about one-third the way up and it levels off down at the bottom. But the first part is still rocky and pretty steep — there's probably enough of a run to climb the whole hill.

So by this time, the old-young man is remembering some more of his English and starts speaking in the second person again, about what we had been doing to the gnarly old hill; how no grass would ever grow and ecology and erosion and stream run-off and pollution and Earl Butz, and the Sierra Club and the police. So Cotter (it's really incredible what a diplomat he can be when the situation demands it) decides we should help the old man move his car. First he walks over, reaches into the sun roof and yanks out my bike like a rabbit out of a hat. Not too bad; the forks are just tweaked a little, like perpendicular, so he straightens them. I think he must be planning some more riding, and decides it would be better without this funny old man, who is now in some sort of coma, sitting on a rock mumbling and trembling.

Anyhow, we decide that he's in no shape to back down, so Cotter picks up the rear end of the VW to move it over, so we can point it downhill. And gosh, wouldn't you know, it gets high-centered on a rock. So we're pulling and pushing and grunting and tugging and all we succeed in doing is getting it cross-ways on the trail, kind of teetering downhill.

Then, way off in the distance, I hear this staccato rat-tat, rat-tat, that sounds a lot like our buddy Crips' Greeves without the silencer. And in the blink of a eye, W.F.O., out of control, not even slowing at the crest of the hill, crazy to catch up, comes Crips' blue cannonball Greeves. He's coming downhill in forty-foot bounds from rock to rock, braking the rear while he's gassing it—beautiful. As he approaches the VW I'm not real sure what he has planned, but at the last possible second he plants the front wheel into an upsloping rock and with brute strength pulls the bike into a wheelie, catching the VW amidships; like a big dun-colored rock the car bounces, rolls, crashes and bangs all the way down the hill, where it lands upside down in a blackberry bramble. Crips, with a triumphant grin, arms across his chest, says, "Gee, I'm glad I found you guys —I got lost back there." We climbed the hill a few times, and when we left the old man was picking berries from inside his car. ●

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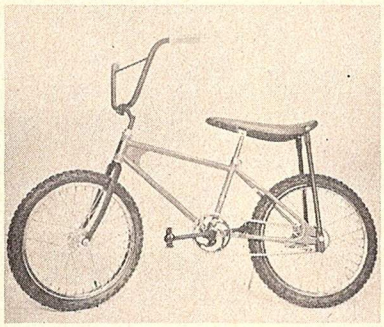

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Mark Hately, little brother of Little John Hately, dumps his big K into the murky depths of the Viewfinders GP water crossing. Mark Kiel photo.

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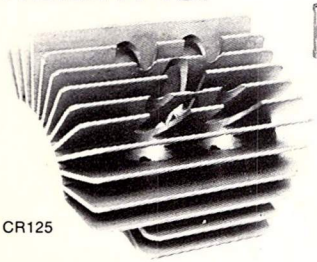

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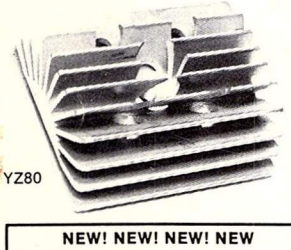

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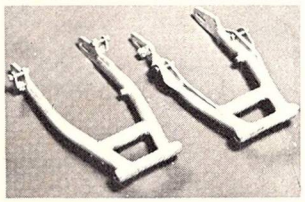

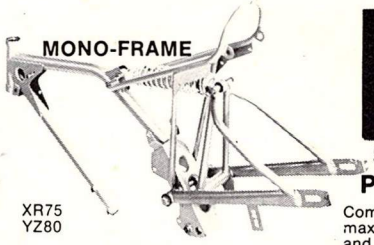

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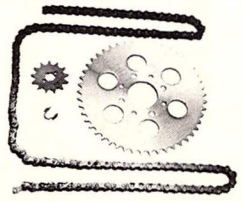

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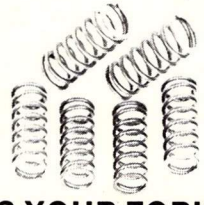

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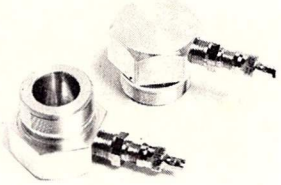

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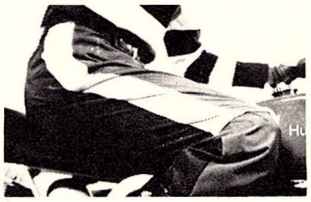

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